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# A MODERN TELEMACHUS



# A MODERN TELEMACHUS

BY

CHARLOTTE M. YONGE

AUTHOR OF THE 'HEIR OF REDCLYFFE,' 'UNKNOWN TO HISTORY,' ETC.

*IN TWO VOLUMES*

VOL. II

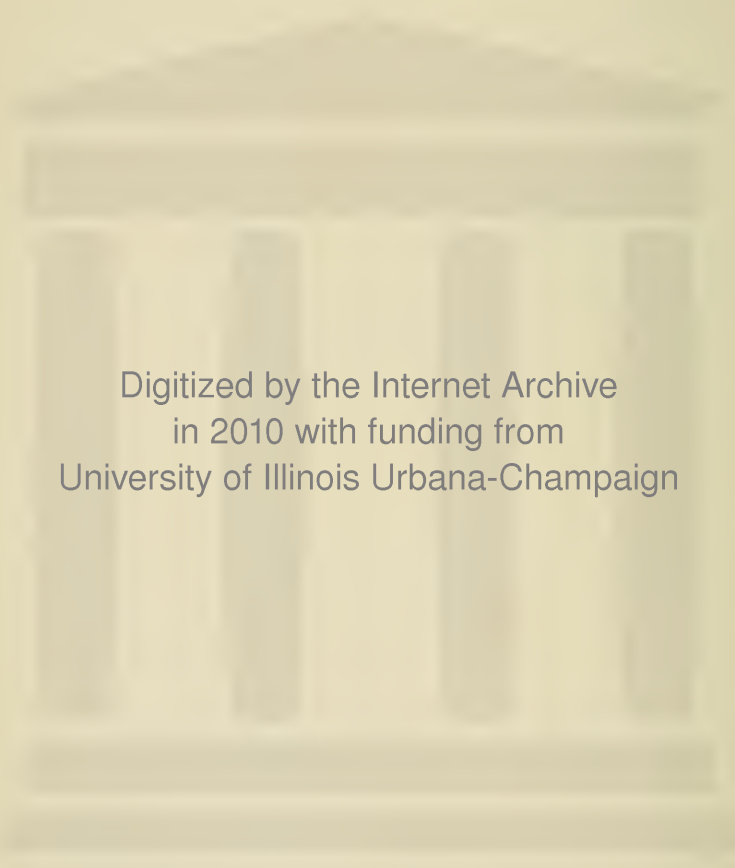
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## CHAPTER I

### A MOORISH VILLAGE

‘Our laws and our worship on thee thou shalt take,  
And this shalt thou first do for Zulema’s sake.’

SCOTT.

WHEN Arthur Hope dashed back from the party on the prow of the wrecked tartane in search of little Ulysse, he succeeded in grasping the child, but at the same moment a huge breaker washed him off the slipperily-sloping deck, and after a scarce conscious struggle he found himself, still retaining his clutch of the boy, in the trough between it and another. He was happily an expert swimmer, and

holding the little fellow's clothes in his teeth, he was able to avoid the dash, and to rise on another wave. Then he perceived that he was no longer near the vessel, but had been carried out to some little distance, and his efforts only succeeded in keeping afloat, not in approaching the shore. Happily a plank drifted so near him that he was able to seize it and throw himself across it, thus obtaining some support, and being able to raise the child farther above the water.

At the same time he became convinced that a strong current, probably from a river or stream, was carrying him out to sea, away from the bay. He saw the black heads of two or three of the Moorish crew likewise floating on spars,

and yielding themselves to the stream, and this made him better satisfied to follow their example. It was a sort of rest, and gave him time to recover from the first exhaustion to convince himself that the little boy was not dead, and to lash him to the plank with a handkerchief.

By and by—he knew not how soon—calls and shouts passed between the Moors; only two seemed to survive, and they no longer obeyed the direction of the current, but turned resolutely towards the land, where Arthur dimly saw a green valley opening towards the sea. This was a much severer effort, but by this time immediate self-preservation had become the only thought, and happily both wind and the very slight tide were

favourable, so that, just as the sun sank beneath the western waves, Arthur felt foothold on a sloping beach of white sand, even as his powers became exhausted. He struggled up out of reach of the sea, and then sank down, exhausted and unconscious.

His first impression was of cries and shrieks round him, as he gasped and panted, then saw as in a dream forms flitting round him, and then—feeling for the child and missing him—he raised himself in consternation, and the movement was greeted by fresh unintelligible exclamations, while a not unkindly hand lifted him up. It belonged to a man in a sort of loose white garment and drawers, with a thin dark-bearded face ; and



---

Arthur, recollecting that the Spanish word *niño* passed current for child in *lingua Franca*, uttered it with an accent of despairing anxiety. He was answered with a volley of words that he only understood to be in a consoling tone, and the speaker pointed inland. Various persons, among whom Arthur saw his recent shipmates, seemed to be going in that direction, and he obeyed his guide, though scarcely able to move from exhaustion and cold, the garments he had retained clinging about him. Some one, however, ran down towards him with a vessel containing a draught of sour milk. This revived him enough to see clearly and follow his guides. After walking a distance, which appeared to him most

laborious, he found himself entering a sort of village, and was ushered through a courtyard into a kind of room. In the centre a fire was burning; several figures were busy round it, and in another moment he perceived that they were rubbing, chafing, and otherwise restoring his little companion.

Indeed Ulysse had just recovered enough to be terribly frightened, and as his friend's voice answered his screams, he sprang from the kind brown hands, and, darting on Arthur, clung to him with face hidden on his shoulder. The women who had been attending to him fell back as the white stranger entered, and almost instantly dry clothes were brought, and while Arthur was warming

himself and putting them on, a little table about a foot high was set, the contents of a cauldron of a kind of soup which had been suspended over the fire were poured into a large round green crock, and in which all were expected to dip their spoons and fingers. Little Ulysse was exceedingly amazed, and observed that *ces gens* were not *bien élevés* to eat out of the dish; but he was too hungry to make any objection to being fed with the wooden spoon that had been handed to Arthur; and when the warm soup, and the meat floating in it, had refreshed them, signs were made to them to lie down on a mat within an open door, and both were worn out enough to sleep soundly.

It was daylight when Arthur was

awakened by poor little Ulysse sitting up and crying out for his *bonne*, his mother, and sister, 'Oh! take me to them,' he cried; 'I do not like this dark place.'

For dark the room was, being windowless, though the golden sunlight could be seen beyond the open doorway, which was under a sort of cloister or verandah overhung by some climbing plant. Arthur, collecting himself, reminded the child how the waves had borne them away from the rest, with earnest soothing promises of care, and endeavouring to get back to the rest. 'Say your prayers that God will take care of you and bring you back to your sister,' Arthur added, for he did not think it possible that the child's mother should have

been saved from the waves ; and his heart throbbed at thoughts of his promise to the poor lady.

‘ But I want my *bonne*,’ sighed Ulysse ;  
‘ I want my clothes. This is an ugly *robe de nuit*, and there is no bed.’

‘ Perhaps we can find your clothes,’ said Arthur. ‘ They were too wet to be kept on last night.’

So they emerged into the court, which had a kind of farmyard appearance ; women with rows of coins hanging over their brows were milking cows and goats, and there was a continuous confusion of sound of their voices, and the lowing and bleating of cattle. At the appearance of Arthur and the boy, there was a general shout, and people seemed to throng in to gaze at them,



the men, handsome, stately, and bearded, with white full drawers, and a bournouse laid so as first to form a flat hood over the head, and then belted in at the waist, with a more or less handsome sash, into which were stuck a spoon and knife, and in some cases one or two pistols. They did not seem ill-disposed, though their language was perfectly incomprehensible. Ulysse's clothes were lying dried by the hearth, and no objection was made to his resuming them. Arthur made gestures of washing or bathing, and was conducted outside the court, to a little stream of pure water descending rapidly to the sea. It was so cold that Ulysse screamed at the touch, as Arthur, with more spectators than he could have desired, did his best to perform

their toilettes. He had divested himself of most of his own garments for the convenience of swimming, but his pockets were left and a comb in them ; and though poor Mademoiselle Julienne would have been shocked at the result of his efforts, and the little silken laced suit was sadly tarnished with sea water, Ulysse became such an astonishing sight that the children danced round him, the women screamed with wonder, and the men said ‘Mashallah!’ The young Scotsman’s height was perhaps equally amazing, for he saw them pointing up to his head as if measuring his stature.

He saw that he was in a village of low houses, with walls of unhewn stone, enclosing yards, and set in the midst of fruit-

trees and gardens. Though so far on in the autumn, there was a rich luxuriant appearance ; roots and fruits, corn and flax, were laid out to dry, and girls and boys were driving the cattle out to pasture. He could not doubt that he had landed among a settled and not utterly uncivilised people, but he was too spent and weary to exert himself, or even to care for much beyond present safety ; and had no sooner returned to his former quarters, and shared with Ulysse a bowl of curds, than they both fell asleep again in the shade of the gourd plant trained on a trellised roof over the wall.

When he next awoke, Ulysse was very happily at play with some little brown children, as if the sports of childhood defied the curse of Babel, and a sailor from the

tartane was being greeted by the master of the house. Arthur hoped that some communication would now be possible, but, unfortunately, the man knew very little of the *lingua Franca* of the Mediterranean, and Arthur knew still less. However, he made out that he was the only one of the shipwrecked crew who had managed to reach the land, and that this was a village of Moors—settled agricultural Moors, not Arabs, good Moslems—who would do him no harm. This, and he pointed to a fine-looking elderly man, was the sheyk of the village, Abou Ben Zegri, and if the young Giaours would conform to the true faith all would be *salem* with them. Arthur shook his head, and tried by word and sign to indicate his anxiety for the rest of his

companions. The sailor threw up his hands, and pointed towards the sea, to show that he believed them to be all lost ; but Arthur insisted that five—marking them off on his fingers—were on *gebal*, a rock, and emphatically indicated his desire of reaching them. The Moor returned the word ‘Cabeleyzes,’ with gestures signifying throat-cutting and slavery, also that these present hosts regarded them as banditti. How far off they were it was not possible to make out, for of course Arthur’s own sensations were no guide ; but he knew that the wreck had taken place early in the afternoon, and that he had come on shore in the dusk, which was then at about five o’clock. There was certainly a promontory, made by the ridge of a hill, and also a river



between him and any survivors there might be.

This was all that he could gather, and he was not sure of even thus much, but he was still too much wearied and battered for any exertion of thought or even anxiety. Three days' tempest in a cockle-shell of a ship, and then three hours' tossing on a plank, had left him little but the desire of repose, and the Moors were merciful and let him alone. It was a beautiful place—that he already knew. A Scot, and used to the sea-coast, his eye felt at home as it ranged to the grand heights in the dim distance, with winter caps of snow, and shaded in the most gorgeous tints of colouring forests beneath, slopes covered with the exquisite green of young wheat. Autumn though it was, the

orange-trees, laden with fruit, the cork-trees, ilexes, and fan-palms, gave plenty of greenery, shading the gardens with prickly pear hedges ; and though many of the fruit-trees had lost their leaves, fig, peach, and olive, and mulberry, caper plants, vines with foliage of every tint of red and purple, which were trained over the trellised courts of the houses, made everything have a look of rural plenty and peace, most unlike all that Arthur had ever heard or imagined of the Moors, who, as he owned to himself, were certainly not all savage pirates and slave - drivers. The whole within was surrounded by a stone wall, with a deep horse - shoe - arched gateway, the fields and pastures lying beyond with some more slightly-walled enclosures meant for

the protection of the flocks and herds at night.

He saw various arts going on. One man was working in iron over a little charcoal fire, with a boy to blow up his bellows, and several more were busied over some pottery, while the women alternated their grinding between two mill stones, and other domestic cares, with spinning, weaving, and beautiful embroidery. To Arthur, who looked on, with no one to speak to except little Ulysse, it was strangely like seeing the life of the Israelites in the Old Testament when they dwelt under their own vines and fig-trees—like reading a chapter in the Bible, as he said to himself, as again and again he saw some allusion to Eastern customs illustrated. He was still

more struck—when, after the various herds of kine, sheep, and goats, with one camel, several asses, and a few slender-limbed Barbary horses had been driven in for the night—by the sight of the population, as the sun sank behind the mountains, all suspending whatever they were about, spreading their prayer carpets, turning eastwards, performing their ablutions, and uttering their brief prayer with one voice so devoutly that he was almost struck with awe.

‘Are they saying their prayers?’ whispered Ulysse, startled by the instant change in his playfellows, and as Arthur acquiesced, ‘Then they are good.’

‘If it were the true faith,’ said Arthur, thinking of the wide difference between

this little fellow and Estelle; but though not two years younger, Ulysse was far more childish than his sister, and when she was no longer present to lead him with her enthusiasm, sank at once to his own level. He opened wide his eyes at Arthur's reply, and said, 'I do not see their idols.'

'They have none,' said Arthur, who could not help thinking that Ulysse might look nearer home for idols—but chiefly concerned at the moment to keep the child quiet, lest he should bring danger on them by interruption.

They were sitting in the embowered porch of the sheyk's court when, a few seconds after the villagers had risen up from their prayer, they saw a figure enter at the village gateway, and the sheyk rise

and go forward. There were low bending in salutation, hands placed on the breast, then kisses exchanged, after which the Sheyk Abou Ben Zegri went out with the stranger, and great excitement and pleasure seemed to prevail among the villagers, especially the women. Arthur heard the word 'Yusuf' often repeated, and by the time darkness had fallen on the village, the sheyk ushered the guest into his court, bringing with him a donkey with some especially precious load — which was removed; after which the supper was served as before in the large low apartment, with a handsomely tiled floor, and an opening in the roof for the issue of the smoke from the fire, which became agreeable in the evening at this season. Before supper, how-



ever, the stranger's feet and hands were washed by a black slave in Eastern fashion ; and then all, as before, sat on mats or cushions round the central bowl, each being furnished with a spoon and thin flat soft piece of bread to dip into the mess of stewed kid, flakes of which might be extracted with the fingers.

The women, who had fastened a piece of linen across their faces, ran about and waited on the guests, who included three or four of the principal men of the village, as well as the stranger, who, as Arthur observed, was not of the uniform brown of the rest, but had some colour in his cheeks, light eyes, and a ruddy beard, and also was of a larger frame than these Moors, who, though graceful, lithe, and exceedingly

stately and dignified, hardly reached above young Hope's own shoulder. Conversation was going on all the time, and Arthur soon perceived that he was the subject of it. As soon as the meal was over, the new-comer addressed him, to his great joy, in French. It was the worst French imaginable—perhaps more correctly *lingua Franca*, with a French instead of an Arabic foundation, but it was more comprehensible than that of the Moorish sailor, and bore some relation to a civilised language; besides which there was something indescribably familiar in the tone of voice, although Arthur's good French often missed of being comprehended.

‘Son of a great man? Ambassador, French!’ The greatness seemed impressed, but whether ambassador was understood

was another thing, though it was accepted as relating to the boy.

‘Secretary to the Ambassador’ seemed to be an equal problem. The man shook his head, but he took in better the story of the wreck, though, like the sailor, he shook his head over the chance of there being any survivors, and utterly negatived the idea of joining them. The great point that Arthur tried to convey was that there would be a very considerable ransom if the child could be conveyed to Algiers, and he endeavoured to persuade the stranger, who was evidently a sort of travelling merchant, and, as he began to suspect, a renegade, to convey them thither; but he only got shakes of the head as answers, and something to the effect that they were

a good deal out of the Dey's reach in those parts, together with what he feared was an intimation that they were altogether in the power of Sheyk Abou Ben Zegri.

They were interrupted by a servant of the merchant, who came to bring him some message as well as a pipe and tobacco. The pipe was carried by a negro boy, at sight of whom Ulysse gave a cry of ecstasy, 'Juba! Juba! Grandmother's Juba! Why do not you speak to me?' as the little black, no bigger than Ulysse himself, grinned with all his white teeth, quite uncomprehending.

'Ah! my poor laddie,' exclaimed Arthur in his native tongue, which he often used with the boy, 'it is only another negro. You are far enough from home.'

The words had an astonishing effect on the merchant. He turned round with the exclamation, 'Ye'll be frae Scotland!'

'And so are you!' cried Arthur, holding out his hand.

'Tak tent, tak tent,' said the merchant hastily, yet with a certain hesitation, as though speaking a long unfamiliar tongue. 'The loons might jalouse our being overfriendly thegither.'

Then he returned to the sheyk, to whom he seemed to be making explanations, and presenting some of his tobacco, which probably was of a superior quality in preparation to what was grown in the village. They solemnly smoked together and conversed, while Arthur watched them anxiously, re-

lieved that he had found an interpreter, but very doubtful whether a renegade could be a friend, even though he were indeed a fellow-countryman.

It was not till several pipes had been consumed, and the village worthies had, with considerable ceremony, taken leave, that the merchant again spoke to Arthur. 'I'll see ye the morn; I hae tell'd the sheyk we are frae the same parts. Maybe I can serve you, if ye ken what's for your guid, but I canna say mair the noo.'

The sheyk escorted him out of the court, for he slept in one of the two striped horse-hair tents, which had been spread within the enclosures belonging to the village, around which were

tethered the mules and asses that carried his wares. Arthur meanwhile arranged his little charge for the night. He felt that among these enemies to their faith he must do what was in his power to keep up that of the child, and not allow his prayers to be neglected; but not being able to repeat the Latin forms, and thinking them unprofitable to the boy himself, he prompted the saying of the Creed and Lord's Prayer in English, and caused them to be repeated after him, though very sleepily and imperfectly.

All the men of the establishment seemed to take their night's rest on a mat, wrapped in a bournouse, wherever they chanced to find themselves,

provided it was under shelter; the women in some *penetralia* beyond a doorway, though they were not otherwise secluded, and only partially veiled their faces at sight of a stranger. Arthur had by this time made out that the sheyk, who was a very handsome man over middle-age, seemed to have two wives; one probably of his own age, and though withered up into a brown old mummy, evidently the ruler at home, wearing the most ornaments, and issuing her orders in a shrill, cracked tone. There was a much younger and handsome one, the mother apparently of two or three little girls from ten or twelve years old to five, and there was a mere girl, with beau-



tiful melancholy gazelle-like eyes, and a baby in her arms. She wore no ornaments, but did not seem to be classed with the slaves who ran about at the commands of the elder dame.

However, his own position was a matter of much more anxious care, although he had more hope of discovering what it really was.

He had, however, to be patient. The sunrise orisons were no sooner paid than there was a continual resort to the tent of the merchant, who was found sitting there calmly smoking his long pipe; and ready to offer the like, also a cup of coffee, to all who came to traffic with him. He seemed to have a miscellaneous stock of coffee, tobacco,

pipes, preparations of sugar, ornaments in gold and silver, jewellery, charms, pistols, and a host of other articles in stock, and to be ready to purchase or barter these for the wax, embroidered handkerchiefs, yarn, and other productions and manufactures of the place. Not a single purchase could be made on either side without a tremendous haggling, shouting, and gesticulating, as if the parties were on the verge of coming to blows; whereas all was in good fellowship, and a pleasing excitement and diversion where time was of no value to anybody. Arthur began to despair of ever gaining attention. He was allowed to wander about as he pleased within the village gates, and

Ulysse was apparently quite happy with the little children, who were beautiful and active, although kept dirty and ragged as a protection from the evil eye.

Somehow the engrossing occupation of every one, especially of the only two creatures with whom he could converse, made Arthur more desolate than ever. He lay down under an ilex, and his heart ached with a sick longing he had not experienced since he had been with the Nithsdales, for his mother and his home—the tall narrow-gabled house that had sprung up close to the grim old peel tower, the smell of the sea, the tinkling of the burn. He fell asleep in the heat of the day, and it was to him as if he were once more sitting by the

old shepherd on the braeside, hearing him tell the old tales of Johnnie Armstrong or Willie o' the wudspurs.

Actually a Scottish voice was in his ears as he looked up and saw the turbaned head of Yusuf the merchant bending over him, and saying—

‘Wake up, my bonny laddie; we can hae our crack in peace while these folks are taking their noonday sleep. Aweel, and where are ye frae, and how do you ca’ yersel’?’

‘I am from Berwickshire,’ responded the youth, and as the man started—‘My name is Arthur Maxwell Hope of Burnside.

‘Eh! No a son of auld Sir Davie?’

‘His youngest son.’

The man clasped his hands, and uttered a strange sound as if in the extremity of amazement, and there was a curious unconscious change of tone, as he said—

‘Sir Davie’s son! Ye’ll never have heard tell of Partan Jeannie?’ he added.

‘A very old fishwife,’ said Arthur, ‘who used to come her rounds to our door? Was she of kin to you?’

‘My mither, sir. Mony’s the time I hae peepit out on the cuddie’s back between the creels at the door of the braw house of Burnside, and mony’s the bannock and cookie the gude lady gied me. My minnie’ll no be living thae noo,’ he added, not very tenderly.

‘I should fear not,’ said Arthur. ‘I

had not seen or heard of her for some time before I left home, and that is now three years since. She looked very old then, and I remember my mother saying she was not fit to come her rounds.'

'She wasna that auld,' returned the merchant gravely; 'but she had led sic a life as falls to the lot of nae wife in this country.'

Arthur had almost said, 'Whose fault was that?' but he durst not offend a possible protector, and softened his words into, 'It is strange to find you here, and a Moham-medan too.'

'Hoots, Maister Arthur, let that flea stick by the wa'. We maun do at Rome as Rome does, as ye'll soon find'—and disregarding Arthur's exclamation—'and the

bit bairn, I thocht ye said he was no Scot, when I was daundering awa' at the French yestreen.'

'No, he is half-Irish, half-French, eldest son of Count Burke, a good Jacobite, who got into trouble with the Prince of Orange, and is high in the French service.'

'And what gars your father's son to be *secretaire*, as ye ca'd it, to Frenchman or Irishman either?'

'Well, it was my own fault. I was foolish enough to run away from school to join the rising for our own King's——'

'Eh, sirs! And has there been a rising on the Border side against the English pock puddings? Oh, gin I had kened it!'

Yusuf's knowledge of English politics had been dim at the best, and he had

apparently left Scotland before even Queen Anne was on the throne. When he understood Arthur's story, he communicated his own. He had been engaged in a serious brawl with some English fishers, and in fear of the consequences had fled from Eyemouth, and after casting about as a common sailor in various merchant ships, had been captured by a Moorish vessel, and had found it expedient to purchase his freedom by conversion to Islam, after which his Scottish shrewdness and thrift had resulted in his becoming a prosperous itinerant merchant, with his headquarters at Bona. He expressed himself willing and anxious to do all he could for his young countryman ; but it would be almost impossible to do so unless Arthur would accept the religion of



his captors ; and he explained that the two boys were the absolute property of the tribe who had discovered and rescued them when going to the seashore to gather kelp for the glass work practised by the Moors in their little furnaces.

‘Forsake my religion ? Never !’ cried Arthur indignantly.

‘Saftly, saftly,’ said Yusuf ; ‘nae doot ye trow as I did that they are a’ mere pagans and savage heathens, worshipping Baal and Ashtaroth, but I fand myself quite mista’en. They hae no idols, and girn at the blinded Papists as muckle as auld Deacon Shortcoats himsel’.

‘I know that,’ threw in Arthur.

‘Ay, and they are a hantle mair pious and devout than ever a body I hae seen in

Eyemouth, or a' the country side to boot ; forbye, my minnie's auld auntie, that sat graning by the ingle, and aye banned us when we came ben. The meneester himsel' dinna gae about blessing and praying over ilka sma' matter like the meanest of us here, and for a' the din they make at hame about the honorable Sabbath, wha thinks of praying five times the day ? While as for being the waur for liquor, these folks kenna the very taste of it. Put yon sheyk down on the wharf at Eyemouth, and what wad he say to the Christian folk there ?'

A shock of conviction passed over Arthur, though he tried to lose it in indignant defence ; but Yusuf did not venture to stay any longer with him, and bidding him think over what had been

said, since slavery or Islam were the only alternatives, returned to the tents of merchandise.

First thoughts with the youth had of course been of horror at the bare idea of apostacy, and yet as he watched his Moorish hosts, he could not but own to himself that he never had dreamt that to be among them would be so like dwelling under the oak of Mamre, in the tents of Abraham. From what he remembered of Partan Jeannie's reputation as a being only tolerated and assisted by his mother, on account of her extreme misery and destitution, he could believe that the ne'er-do-weel son, who must have forsaken her before he himself was born, might have really been raised in morality by association with the grave,

faithful, and temperate followers of Mohammed, rather than the scum of the port of Eyemouth.

For himself and the boy, what did slavery mean? He hoped to understand better from Yusuf, and at any rate to persuade the man to become the medium of communication with the outside world, beyond that ‘dissociable ocean,’ over which his wistful gaze wandered. Then the ransom of the little Chevalier de Bourke would be certain, and, if there were any gratitude in the world, his own. But how long would this take, and what might befall them in the meantime?

Ulysse all this time seemed perfectly happy with the small Moors, who all romped together without distinction of rank, of

master, slave or colour, for Yusuf's little negro was freely received among them. At night, however, Ulysse's old home self seemed to revive ; he crept back to Arthur, tired and weary, fretting for mother, sister, and home ; and even after he had fallen asleep, waking again to cry for Julienne. Poor Arthur, he was a rough nurse, but pity kept him patient, and he was even glad to see that the child had not forgotten his home.

Meantime, ever since the sunset prayer, there had been smoking of pipes and drinking of coffee, and earnest discussion between the sheyk and the merchant, and by and by Yusuf came and sat himself down by Arthur, smiling a little at the young man's difficulty in disposing of those long legs upon the ground.

‘Ye’ll have to learn this and other things, sir,’ said he, as he crossed his own under him, Eastern fashion; but his demeanour was on the whole that of the fisher to the laird’s son, and he evidently thought that he had a grand proposal to make, for which Master Arthur ought to be infinitely obliged.

He explained to Arthur that Sheyk Abou Ben Zegri had never had more than two sons, and that both had been killed the year before in trying to recover their cattle from the Cabeleyzes, ‘a sort of Hieland caterans.’

The girl whom Arthur had noticed was the widow of the elder of the two, and the child was only a daughter. The sheyk had been much impressed by Arthur’s

exploits in swimming or floating round the headland and saving the child, and regarded his height as something gigantic. Moreover, Yusuf had asserted that he was son to a great Bey in his own country, and in consequence Abou Ben Zegri was willing to adopt him as his son, provided he would embrace the true faith, and marry Ayesha, the widow.

‘And,’ said Yusuf, ‘these women are no that ill for wives, as I ken owre weel’—and he sighed. ‘I had as gude and douce a wee wifie at Bona as heart culd wish, and twa bonny bairnies; but when I cam’ back frae my rounds, the plague had been there before me. They were a’ gone, even Ali, that had just began to ca’ me Ab, Ab, and I hae never had heart to gang back to the

town house. She was a gude wife,—nae flying, nae rampaunging. She wad hae died wi' shame to be likened to thae randy wives at hame. Ye might do waur than tak' such a fair offer, Maister Arthur.'

'You mean it all kindly,' said Arthur, touched; 'but for nothing—no, for nothing, can a Christian deny his Lord, nor yield up his hopes for hereafter.'

'As for that,' returned Yusuf, 'the meneester and Deacon Shortcoats, and my auld auntie, and the lave of them, aye ca'ed me a vessel of destruction. That was the best name they had for puir Tam. So what odds culd it mak, if I took up with the Prophet, and I was ower lang leggit to row in a galley? Forbye, here they say that a man who prays and gies



awmous, and keeps frae wine, is sicker to win to Paradise and a' the houris. I had rather it war my puir Zorah than any strange houri of them a'; but any way, I hae been a better man sin' I took up wi' them than ever I was as a cursing, swearing, drunken, fechting sailor lad wha feared neither God nor devil.'

'That was scarce the fault of the Christian faith,' said Arthur.

'Aweel, the first answer in the Shorter Carritch was a' they ever garred me learn, and that is what we here say of Allah. I see no muckle to choose, and I *ken* ane thing—it is a hell on earth at ance gin ye gang not alang wi' them. And that's sicker, as ye'll find to your cost, sir, gin ye be na the better guided.'

‘With hope, infinite hope beyond,’ said Arthur, trying to fortify himself. ‘No, I cannot, cannot deny my Lord—my Lord that bought me!’

‘We own Issa Ben Mariam for a Prophet,’ said Yusuf.

‘But He is my only Master, my Redeemer, and God. No, come what may, I can never renounce Him,’ said Arthur with vehemence.

‘Weel, aweel,’ said Yusuf, ‘maybe ye’ll see in time what’s for your gude. I’ll tell the sheyk it would misbecome your father’s son to do sic a deed owre lichtly, and strive to gar him wait while I am in these parts to get your word, and nae doot it will be wiselike at the last.’

## CHAPTER II

### MASTER AND SLAVE

‘I only heard the reckless waters roar,  
Those waves that would not bear me from the shore ;  
I only marked the glorious sun and sky  
Too bright, too blue for my captivity,  
And felt that all which Freedom’s bosom cheers,  
Must break my chain before it dried my tears.’

BYRON (*The Corsair*).

AT the rate at which the traffic in Yusuf’s tent proceeded, Arthur Hope was likely to have some little time for deliberation on the question presented to him whether to be a free Moslem sheyk or a Christian slave.

Not only had almost every household in

El Arnieh to chaffer with the merchant for his wares and to dispose of home-made commodities, but from other adowaras and from hill-farms Moors and Cabyles came in with their produce of wax, wool or silk, to barter—if not with Yusuf, with the inhabitants of El Arnieh, who could weave and embroider, forge cutlery, and make glass from the raw material these supplied. Other Cabyles, divers from the coast, came up with coral and sponges, the latter of which was the article in which Yusuf preferred to deal, though nothing came amiss to him that he could carry, or that could carry itself—such as a young foal; even the little black boy had been taken on speculation—and so indeed had the big Abyssinian, who, though dumb, was the most useful,

ready, and alert of his five slaves. Every bargain seemed to occupy at least an hour, and perhaps Yusuf lingered the longer in order to give Arthur more time for consideration; or it might be that his native tongue, once heard, exercised an irresistible fascination over him. He never failed to have what he called a 'crack' with his young countryman at the hour of the siesta, or at night, perhaps persuading the sheyk that it was controversial, though it was more apt to be on circumstances of the day's trade or the news of the Border-side. Controversy indeed there could be little with one so ignorant as kirk treatment in that century was apt to leave the outcasts of society, nor had conversion to Islam given him much instruction in its tenets; so that

the conversation generally was on earthly topics, though it always ended in assurances that Master Arthur would suffer for it if he did not perceive what was for his good. To which Arthur replied to the effect that he must suffer rather than deny his faith ; and Yusuf, declaring that a wilful man maun have his way, and that he would rue it too late, went off affronted, but always returned to the charge at the next opportunity.

Meantime Arthur was free to wander about unmolested and pick up the language, in which, however, Ulysse made far more rapid progress, and could be heard chattering away as fast, if not as correctly, as if it were French or English. The delicious climate and the open-air life were filling the little fellow with a strength and vigour

unknown to him in a Parisian salon, and he was in the highest spirits among his brown playfellows, ceasing to pine for his mother and sister; and though he still came to Arthur for the night, or in any trouble, it was more and more difficult to get him to submit to be washed and dressed in his tight European clothes, or to say his prayers. He was always sleepy at night and volatile in the morning, and could not be got to listen to the little instructions with which Arthur tried to arm him against Mohammedanism into which the poor little fellow was likely to drift as ignorantly and unconsciously as Yusuf himself.

And what was the alternative? Arthur himself never wavered, nor indeed actually felt that he had a choice; but the prospect

before him was gloomy, and Yusuf did not soften it. The sheyk would sell him, and he would either be made to work in some mountain-farm, or put on board a galley; and Yusuf had sufficient experience of the horrors of the latter to assure him emphatically that the gude leddy of Burnside would break her heart to think of her bonny laddie there.

‘It would more surely break her heart to think of her son giving up his faith,’ returned Arthur.

As to the child, the opinion of the tribe seemed to be that he was just fit to be sent to the Sultan to be bred as a Janissary. ‘He will come that gate to be as great a man as in his ain countree,’ said Yusuf; ‘wi’ horse to ride, and sword to bear, and



braws to wear, like King Solomon in all his glory.'

'While his father and mother would far rather he were lying dead with her under the waves in that cruel bay,' returned Arthur.

'Hout, mon, ye dinna ken what's for his gude, nor for your ain neither,' retorted Yusuf.

'Good here is not good hereafter.'

'The life of a dog and waur here,' muttered Yusuf; 'ye'll mind me when it is too late.'

'Nay, Yusuf, if you will only take word of our condition to Algiers, we shall—at least the boy—be assuredly redeemed, and you would win a high reward.'

‘I am no free to gang to Algiers,’ said Yusuf. ‘I fell out with a loon there, one of those Janissaries that gang hectoring aboot as though the world were not gude enough for them, and if I hadna made the best of my way out of the toon, my pow wad be a worricow on the wa’s of the tower.’

‘There are French at Bona, you say. Remember, I ask you to put yourself in no danger, only to bear the tidings to any European,’ entreated Arthur.

‘And how are they to find ye?’ demanded Yusuf. ‘Abou Ben Zegri will never keep you here after having evened his gude-daughter to ye. He’ll sell you to some corsair captain, and then the best that could betide ye wad be that

a shot frae the Knights of Malta should make quick work wi' ye. Or look at the dumbie there, Fareek. A Christian, he ca's himsel', too, though 'tis of a by ordinar' fashion, such as Deacon Short-coats would scarce own. I coft him dog cheap at Tunis, when his master, the Vizier, had had his tongue cut out—for but knowing o' some deed that suld ne'er have been done—and his puir feet bastinadoed to a jelly. Gin a' the siller in the Dey's treasury ransomed ye, what gude would it do ye after that?'

'I cannot help that—I cannot forsake my God. I must trust Him not to forsake me.'

And, as usual, Yusuf went off angrily

muttering, 'He that will to Cupar, maun to Cupar.'

Perhaps Arthur's resistance had begun more for the sake of honour, and instinctive clinging to hereditary faith, without the sense of heroism or enthusiasm for martyrdom which sustained Estelle, and rather with the feeling that inconstancy to his faith and his Lord would be base and disloyal. But, as the long days rolled on, if the future of toil and dreary misery developed itself before him, the sense of personal love and aid towards the Lord and Master whom he served grew upon him. Neither the gazelle-eyed Ayesha nor the prosperous village life presented any great temptation. He would have given them

all for one bleak day of mist on a Border moss; it was the appalling contrast with the hold of a Moorish galley that at times startled him, together with the only too great probability that he should be utterly incapable of saving poor little Ulysse from unconscious apostacy.

Once Yusuf observed, that if he would only make outward submission to Moslem law, he might retain his own belief and trust in the Lord he seemed so much to love, and of whom he said more good than any Moslem did of the Prophet.

‘If I deny Him, He will deny me,’ said Arthur.

‘And will na He forgive ane as is hard pressed?’ asked Yusuf.

‘It is a very different thing to go

against the light, as I should be doing,' said Arthur, 'and what it might be for that poor bairn, whom God preserve.'

'And wow! sir. 'Tis far different wi' you that had the best of gude learning frae the gude leddy,' muttered Yusuf. 'My minnie aye needit me to sort the fish and gang her errands, and wad scarce hae sent me to scule, gin I wad hae gane where they girmed at me for Partan Jeannie's wean, and gied me mair o' the tawse than of the hornbook. Gin the Lord, as ye ca' Him, had ever seemed to me what ye say He is to you, Maister Arthur, I nicht hae thocht twice o'er the matter. But there's nae ganging back the noo. A Christian's life they harm na, though they mak' it a mere weariness to

him ; but for him that quits the Prophet, tearing the flesh wi' iron cleeks is the best they hae for him.'

This time Yusuf retreated, not as usual in anger, but as if the bare idea he had broached was too terrible to be dwelt upon. He had by the end of a fortnight completed all his business at El Arnieh, and Arthur, having by this time picked up enough of the language to make himself comprehensible, and to know fully what was set before him, was called upon to make his decision, so that either he might be admitted by regular ritual into the Moslem faith, and adopted by the sheyk, or else be advertised by Yusuf at the next town as a strong young slave.

Sitting in the gate among the village magnates, like an elder of old, Sheyk Abou Ben Zegri, with considerable grace and dignity, set the choice before the Son of the Sea in most affectionate terms, asking of him to become the child of his old age, and to heal the breach left by the swords of the robbers of the mountains.

The old man's fine dark eyes filled with tears, and there was a pathos in his noble manner that made Arthur greatly grieved to disappoint him, and sorry not to have sufficient knowledge of the language to qualify more graciously the resolute reply he had so often rehearsed to himself, expressing his hearty thanks, but declaring that nothing could



induce him to forsake the religion of his fathers.

‘Wilt thou remain a dog of an unbeliever, and receive the treatment of dogs?’

‘I must,’ said Arthur.

‘The youth is a goodly youth,’ said the sheyk; ‘it is ill that his heart is blind. Once again, young man, Issa Ben Mariam and slavery, or Mohammed and freedom?’

‘I cannot deny my Lord Christ.’

There was a pause. Arthur stood upright, with lips compressed, hands clasped together, while the sheyk and his companions seemed struck by his courage and high spirit. Then one of them—a small, ugly fellow, who had some

pretensions to be considered the sheyk's next heir—cried, 'Out on the infidel dog!' and set the example of throwing a handful of dust at him. The crowd who watched around were not slow to follow the example, and Arthur thought he was actually being stoned; but the missiles were for the most part not harmful, only disgusting, blinding, and confusing. There was a tremendous hubbub of vituperation, and he was at last actually stunned by a blow, waking to find himself alone, and with hands and feet bound, in a dirty little shed appropriated to camels. Should he ever be allowed to see poor little Ulysse again, or to speak to Yusuf, in whom lay their only faint hope of redemption? He was helpless,

and the boy was at the mercy of the Moors. Was he utterly forsaken?

It was growing late in the day, and he had had no food for many hours. Was he to be neglected and starved? At last he heard steps approaching, and the door was opened by the man who had led the assault on him, who addressed him as ‘Son of an old ass—dog of a slave,’ bade him stand up and show his height, at the same time cutting the cords that bound him. It was an additional pang that it was to Yusuf that he was thus to exhibit himself, no doubt in order that the merchant should carry a description of him to some likely purchaser. He could not comprehend the words that passed, but it was very bitter to be handled like a

horse at a fair—doubly so that he, a Hope of Burnside, should thus be treated by Partan Jeannie's son.

There ensued outside the shrieking and roaring which always accompanied a bargain, and which lasted two full hours. Finally Yusuf looked into the hut, and roughly said in Arabic, 'Come over to me, dog; thou art mine. Kiss the shoe of thy master'—adding in his native tongue, 'For ance, sir. It maun be done before these loons.'

Certainly the ceremony would have been felt as less humiliating towards almost anybody else, but Arthur endured it; and then was led away to the tents beyond the gate.

'There, sir,' said Yusuf, 'it ill sorts

your father's son to be in sic a case, but it canna be helpit. I culd na leave behind the bonny Scots tongue, let alane the gude Leddy Hope's son.'

'You have been very good to me, Yusuf,' said Arthur, his pride much softened by the merchant's evident sense of the situation. 'I know you mean me well, but the boy——'

'Hoots! the bairn is happy eno'. He will come to higher preferment than even you or I. Why, mon, an Aga of the Janissaries is as good as the Deuk himsel'.'

'Yusuf, I am very grateful—I believe you must have paid heavily to spare me from ill usage.'

'Ye may say that, sir. Forty piastres of Tunis, and eight mules, and twa pair of

silver-mounted pistols. The extortionate rogue wad hae had the little dagger, but I stood out against that.'

'I see, I am deeply beholden,' said Arthur; 'but it would be tenfold better if you would take him instead of me!'

'What for suld I do that? He is nae countryman of mine—one side French and the other Irish. He is naught to me.'

'He is heir to a noble house,' waged Arthur. 'They will reward you amply for saving him.'

'Mair like to girn at me for a Moor. Na, na! Hae na I dune enough for ye, Maister Arthur—giving half my beasties, and more than half my silver? Canna ye be content without that whining bairn?'

'I should be a forsworn man to be

content to leave the child, whose dead mother prayed me to protect him, amid those who will turn him from her faith. See, now, I am a man, and can guard myself, by the grace of God; but to leave the poor child here would be letting these men work their will on him ere any ransom could come. His mother would deem it giving him up to perdition. Let me remain here, and take the helpless child. You know how to bargain. His price might be my ransom.'

'Ay, when the jackals and hyenas have picked your banes, or you have died under the lash, chained to the oar, as I hae seen, Maister Arthur.'

'Better so than betray the dead woman's trust. How no——'

For there was a pattering of feet, a cry of ‘Arthur, Arthur!’ and sobbing, screaming, and crying, Ulysse threw himself on his friend’s breast. He was pursued by one or two of the hangers-on of the sheyk’s household, and the first comer seized him by the arm; but he clung to Arthur, screamed and kicked, and the old nurse who had come hobbling after coaxed in vain. He cried out in a mixture of Arabic and French that he *would* sleep with Arthur—Arthur must put him to bed; no one should take him away.

‘Let him stay,’ responded Yusuf; ‘his time will come soon enough.’

Indulgence to children was the rule, and there was an easy, good-nature about the race which made them ready to defer the



storm, and acquiesce in the poor little fellow remaining for another evening with that last remnant of his home to whom he always reverted at nightfall.

He held trembling by Arthur till all were gone, then looked about in terror, and required to be assured that no one was coming to take him away.

‘They shall not,’ he cried. ‘Arthur, you will not leave me alone? They are all gone—Mamma, and Estelle, and *la bonne*, and Laurent, and my uncle, and all, and you will not go.’

‘Not now, not to-night, my dear little mannie,’ said Arthur, tears in his eyes for the first time throughout these misfortunes.

‘Not now! No, never!’ said the boy, hugging him almost to choking. ‘That

naughty Ben Kader said they had sold you for a slave, and you were going away ; but I knew I should find you—you are not a slave !—you are not black——’

‘ Ah ! Ulysse, it is too true ; I am——’

‘ No ! no ! no !’ the child stamped, and hung on him in a passion of tears. ‘ You shall not be a slave. My papa shall come with his soldiers and set you free.’

Altogether the boy’s vehemence, agitation, and terror were such that Arthur found it impossible to do anything but soothe and hush him, as best might be, till his sobs subsided gradually, still heaving his little chest even after he fell asleep in the arms of his unaccustomed nurse, who found himself thus baffled in using this last and only

opportunity of trying to strengthen the child's faith, and was also hindered from pursuing Yusuf, who had left the tent. And if it were separation that caused all this distress, what likelihood that Yusuf would encumber himself with a child who had shown such powers of wailing and screaming?

He durst not stir nor speak for fear of wakening the boy, even when Yusuf returned and stretched himself on his mat, drawing a thick woollen cloth over him, for the nights were chill. Long did Arthur lie awake under the strange sense of slavery and helplessness, and utter uncertainty as to his fate, expecting, in fact, that Yusuf meant to keep him as a sort of tame animal to

talk Scotch ; but hoping to work on him in time to favour an escape, and at any rate to despatch a letter to Algiers, as a forlorn hope for the ultimate redemption of the poor little unconscious child who lay warm and heavy across his breast. Certainly, Arthur had never so prayed for aid, light, and deliverance as now !

## CHAPTER III

### THE SEARCH

‘The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks,  
The long day wanes, the slow moon climbs. The deep  
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends.’

TENNYSON.

ARTHUR fell asleep at last, and did not waken till after sunrise, nor did Ulysse, who must have been exhausted with crying and struggling. When they did awaken, Arthur thinking with heavy heart that the moment of parting was come, he saw indeed the other three slaves busied in making bales of the merchandise ; but the master, as well as

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the Abyssinian, Fareek, and the little negro were all missing. Bekir, who was a kind of foreman, and looked on the new white slave with some jealousy, roughly pointed to some coarse food, and in reply to the question whether the merchant was taking leave of the sheyk, intimated that it was no business of theirs, and assumed authority to make his new fellow-slave assist in the hardest of the packing. Arthur had no heart to resist, much as it galled him to be ordered about by this rude fellow. It was only a taste, as he well knew, of what he had embraced, and he was touched by poor little Ulysse's persistency in keeping as close as possible, though his playfellows came down and tried first

to lure, then to drag him away, and finally remained to watch the process of packing up. Though Bekir was too disdainful to reply to his fellow-slave's questions, Arthur picked up from answers to the Moors who came down that Yusuf had recollected that he had not finished his transactions with a little village of Cabyle coral and sponge-fishers on the coast, and had gone down thither, taking the little negro, to whom the headman seemed to have taken a fancy, so as to become a possible purchaser, and with the Abyssinian to attend to the mules.

A little before sundown Yusuf returned. Fareek lifted down a pannier covered by a crimson and yellow kerchief, and Yusuf declared, with much

apparent annoyance, that the child was sick, and that this had frustrated the sale. He was asleep, must be carried into the tent, and not disturbed: for though the Cabyles had not purchased him, there was no affording to lose anything of so much value. Moreover, observing Ulysse still hovering round the Scot, he said, 'You may bide here the night, laddie, I ha tell't the sheyk;' and he repeated the same to the slaves in Arabic, dismissing them to hold a parting feast on a lamb stuffed with pistachio nuts, together with their village friends.

Then drawing near to Arthur, he said, 'Can ye gar yon wean keep a quiet sough, if we make him pass for the little black?'



Arthur started with joy, and stammered some words of intense relief and gratitude.

‘The deed’s no dune yet,’ said Yusuf, ‘and it is ower like to end in our leaving a’ our banes on the sands ! But a wilfu’ man maun have his way,’ he repeated ; ‘so, sir, if it be your wull, ye’d better speak to the bairn, for we must make a blackamoor of him while there is licht to do it, or Bekir, whom I dinna lippen to, comes back frae the feast.’

Ulysse, being used to Irish-English, had little understanding of Yusuf’s broad Scotch ; but he was looking anxiously from one to the other of the speakers, and when Arthur explained to him that the disguise, together with perfect silence, was the only hope of not being left

behind among the Moors, and the best chance of getting back to his home and dear ones again, he perfectly understood. As to the blackening, for which Yusuf had prepared a mixture to be laid on with a feather, it was perfectly enchanting to *faire la comedie*. He laughed so much that he had to be peremptorily hushed, and they were sensible of the danger that in case of a search he might betray himself to his Moorish friends; and Arthur tried to make him comprehend the extreme danger, making him cry so that his cheeks had to be touched up. His eyes and hair were dark, and the latter was cut to its shortest by Yusuf, who further managed to fasten some tufts of wool dipped in the black unguent to the

kerchief that bound his head. The childish features had something of the Irish cast, which lent itself to the transformation, and in the scanty garments of the little negro Arthur owned that he should never have known the small French gentleman. Arthur was full of joy — Yusuf gruff, brief, anxious, like one acting under some compulsion most unwillingly, and even despondently, but apparently constrained by a certain instinctive feudal feeling, which made him follow the desires of the young Border laird's son.

All had been packed beforehand, and there was nothing to be done but to strike the tents, saddle the mules, and start. Ulysse, still very sleepy, was lifted into the pannier almost at the first streak of dawn,

while the slaves were grumbling at being so early called up; and to a Moor who wakened up and offered to take charge of the little Bey, Yusuf replied that the child had been left in the sheyk's house.

So they were safely out at the outer gate, and proceeding along a beautiful path leading above the cliffs. The mules kept in one long string, Bekir with the foremost, which was thus at some distance from the hindmost, which carried Ulysse and was attended by Arthur, while the master rode his own animals and gave directions. The fiction of illness was kept up, and when the bright eyes looked up in too lively a manner, Yusuf produced some of the sweets, which were always part of his stock in trade, as a bribe to quietness.

At sunrise the halt for prayer was a trial to Arthur's intense anxiety, and far more so was the noontide one for sleep. He even ventured a remonstrance, but was answered, 'Mair haste, worse speed. Our lives are no worth a boddle till the search is over.'

They were on the shady side of a great rock overhung by a beautiful creeping plant, and with a spring near at hand, and Yusuf, in leisurely fashion, squatted down, caused Arthur to lift out the child, who was fast asleep again, and the mules to be allowed to feed, and distributed some dried goat's flesh and dates ; but Ulysse, somewhat to Arthur's alarm, did not wake sufficiently to partake.

Looking up in alarm, he met a sign

from Yusuf, and presently a whisper, ‘No hurt done—’tis safer thus——’

And by this time there were alarming sounds on the air. The sheyk and two of the chief men of El Arnieh were on horse-back and armed with matchlocks; and the whole posse of the village were following on foot, with yells and vituperations of the entire ancestry of the merchant, and far more complicated and furious threats than Arthur could follow; but he saw Yusuf go forward to meet them with the utmost cool courtesy.

They seemed somewhat discomposed: Yusuf appeared to condole with them on the loss, and, waving his hands, put all his baggage at their service for a search, letting them run spears through the bales, and

overturn the baskets of sponges, and search behind every rock. When they approached the sleeping boy, Arthur, with throbbing heart, dimly comprehended that Yusuf was repeating the story of the disappointment of a purchase caused by his illness, and lifting for a moment the covering laid over him to show the bare black legs and arms. There might also have been some hint of infection which, in spite of all Moslem belief in fate, deterred Abou Ben Zegri from an over-close inspection. Yusuf further invented a story of having put the little Frank in charge of a Moorish woman in the adowara; but added he was so much attached to the Son of the Sea, that most likely he had wandered out in search of him, and the only wise course would be to seek him before he was

devoured by any of the wild beasts near home.

Nevertheless, there was a courteous and leisurely smoking of pipes and drinking of coffee before the sheyk and his followers turned homewards. To Arthur's alarm and surprise, however, Yusuf did not resume the journey, but told Bekir that there would hardly be a better halting-place within their powers, as the sun was already some way on his downward course ; and besides, it would take some time to repack the goods which had been cast about in every direction during the search. The days were at their shortest, though that was not very short, closing in at about five o'clock, so that there was not much time to spare. Arthur began to feel some alarm at the



continued drowsiness of the little boy, who only once muttered something, turned round, and slept again.

‘What have you done to him?’ asked Arthur anxiously.

‘The poppy,’ responded Yusuf. ‘Never fash yoursel’. The bairn willna be a hair the waur, and ’tis better so than that he shuld rax a’ our craigs.’

Yusuf’s peril was so much the greater, that it was impossible to object to any of his precautions, especially as he might take offence and throw the whole matter over; but it was impossible not to chafe secretly at the delay, which seemed incomprehensible. Indeed, the merchant was avoiding private communication with Arthur, only assuming the master, and ordering about in a peremp-

tory fashion which it was very hard to digest.

After the sunset orisons had been performed, Yusuf regaled his slaves with a donation of coffee and tobacco, but with a warning to Arthur not to partake, and to keep to windward of them. So too did the Abyssinian, and the cause of the warning was soon evident, as Bekir and his companion nodded, and then sank into a slumber as sound as that of the little Frenchman. Indeed, Arthur himself was weary enough to fall asleep soon after sundown, in spite of his anxiety, and the stars were shining like great lamps when Yusuf awoke him. One mule stood equipped beside him, and held by the Abyssinian. Yusuf pointed to the child, and said, 'Lift him upon it.'

Arthur obeyed, finding a pannier empty on one side to receive the child, who only muttered and writhed instead of awaking. The other side seemed laden. Yusuf led the animal, retracing their way, while fire-flies flitted around with their green lights, and the distant laughter of hyenas gave Arthur a thrill of loathing horror. Huge bats fluttered round, and once or twice grim shapes crossed their path. ‘Uncanny beasties,’ quoth Yusuf; ‘but they will soon be behind us.’

He turned into a rapidly-sloping path. Arthur felt a fresh salt breeze in his face, and his heart leapt up with hope.

In about an hour and a half they had reached a cove, shut in by dark rocks which in the night looked immeasurable, but on

the white beach a few little huts were dimly discernible, one with a light in it. The sluggish dash of waves could be heard on the shore ; there was a sense of infinite space and breadth before them ; and Jupiter sitting in the north-west was like an enormous lamp, casting a pathway of light shimmering on the waters to lead the exiles home.

Three or four boats were drawn up on the beach ; a man rose up from within one, and words in a low voice were exchanged between him and Yusuf ; while Fareek, grinning so that his white teeth could be seen in the starlight, unloaded the mule, placing its packs, a long Turkish blunderbuss, and two skins of water, in the boat, and arranging a mat on which Arthur could lay the sleeping child.

Well might the youth's heart bound with gratitude, as, unmindful of all the further risks and uncertainties to be encountered, he almost saw his way back to Burnside !

## CHAPTER IV

### ESCAPE

‘ Beside the helm he sat, steering expert,  
Nor sleep fell ever on his eyes that watch’d  
Intent the Pleiads, tardy in decline,  
Bootes and the Bear, call’d else the Wain,  
Which in his polar prison circling, looks  
Direct towards Orion, and alone  
Of these sinks never to the briny deep.’

*Odyssey* (COWPER).

THE boat was pushed off, the Abyssinian leapt into it; Arthur paused to pour out his thankfulness to Yusuf, but was met with the reply, ‘ Hout awa’ ! Time enough for that—in wi’ ye.’ And fancying there was some alarm, he sprang in, and to his amazement found Yusuf instantly at his side, taking the

rudder, and giving some order to Fareek, who had taken possession of a pair of oars ; while the waters seemed to flash and glitter a welcome at every dip.

‘ You are coming ! you are coming ! ’ exclaimed Arthur, clasping the merchant’s hand, almost beside himself with joy.

‘ Sma’ hope wad there be of a callant like yersel’ and the wean there winning awa’ by yer lane,’ growled Yusuf.

‘ You have given up all for us.’

‘ There wasna muckle to gie,’ returned the sponge merchant. ‘ Sin’ the gudewife and her bit bairnies at Bona were gane, I hadna the heart to gang thereawa’, nor quit the sound o’ the bonny Scots tongue. I wad as soon gang to the bottom as to the toom house. For dinna ye trow yersells ower sicker e’en the noo.’

‘Is there fear of pursuit?’

‘No mickle o’ that. The folk here are what they ca’ Cabyles, a douce set, not for-gathering with Arabs nor wi’ Moors. I wad na gang among them till the search was over to-day; but yesterday I saw yon carle, and coft the boatie frae him for the wee blackamoor and the mule. The Moors at El Aziz are not seafaring; and gin the morn they jalouse what we have done, we have the start of them. Na, I’m not feared for them; but forbye that, this is no the season for an open boatie wi’ a crew of three and a wean. Gin we met an Algerian or Tunisian cruiser, as we are maist like to do, a bullet or drooning wad be ower gude in their e’en for us—for me, that is to say. They wad spare the bairn, and may think you too



likely a lad to hang on the walls like a split corbie on the woodsman's lodge.'

'Well, Yusuf, my name is Hope, you know,' said Arthur. 'God has brought us so far, and will scarce leave us now. I feel three times the man that I was when I lay down this evening. Do we keep to the north, where we are sure to come to a Christian land in time?'

'Easier said than done. Ye little ken what the currents are in this same sea, or deed ye'll soon ken when we get into them.'

Arthur satisfied himself that they were making for the north by looking at the Pole Star, so much lower than he was used to see it in Scotland that he hardly recognised his old friend ; but, as he watched the studded belt of the Hunter and the glittering

Pleiades, the Horatian dread of *Nimbosus Orion* occurred to him as a thought to be put away.

Meantime there was a breeze from the land, and the sail was hoisted. Yusuf bade both Arthur and Fareek lie down to sleep, for their exertions would be wanted by and by, since it would not be safe to use the sail by daylight. It was very cold—wild blasts coming down from the mountains; but Arthur crept under the woollen mantle that had been laid over Ulysse, and was weary enough to sleep soundly. Both were awakened by the hauling down of the mast; and the little boy, who had quite slept off the drug, scrambling out from under the covering, was astonished beyond measure at finding himself between the glittering,

sparkling expanse of sea and the sky, where the sun had just leapt up in a blaze of gold.

The white summits of Atlas were tipped with rosy light, beautiful to behold, though the voyagers had much rather have been out of sight of them.

‘How much have we made, Yusuf?’ began Arthur.

‘Tam Armstrong, so please you, sir! Yusuf’s dead and buried the noo; and if I were farther beyant the grip of them that kenned him, my thrapple would feel all the sounder!’

This day was, he further explained, the most perilous one, since they were by no means beyond the track of vessels plying on the coast; and as a very jagged and broken cluster of rocks lay near, he decided on

availing themselves of the shelter they afforded. The boat was steered into a narrow channel between two which stood up like the fangs of a great tooth, and afforded a pleasant shade; but there was such a screaming and calling of gulls, terns, cormorants, and all manner of other birds, as they entered the little strait, and such a cloud of them hovered and whirled overhead, that Tam uttered imprecations on their skirling, and bade his companions lie close and keep quiet till they had settled again, lest the commotion should betray that the rocks were the lair of fugitives.

It was not easy to keep Ulysse quiet, for he was in raptures at the rush of winged creatures, and no less so at the wonderful sea-anemones and starfish in the pools,

where long streamers of weed of beautiful colours floated on the limpid water.

Nothing reduced him to stillness but the sight of the dried goat's flesh and dates that Tam Armstrong produced, and for which all had appetites, which had to be checked, since no one could tell how long it would be before any kind of haven could be reached.

Arthur bathed himself and his charge in a pool, after Tam had ascertained that no many-armed squid or cuttlefish lurked within it. And while Ulysse disported himself like a little fish, Arthur did his best to restore him to his natural complexion, and tried to cleanse the little garments, which showed only too plainly the lack of any change, and which were the only Frank or Christian clothes among them,

since young Hope himself had been almost stripped when he came ashore, and wore the usual garb of Yusuf's slaves.

Presently Fareek made an imperative sign to hush the child's merry tongue ; and peering forth in intense anxiety, the others perceived a lateen sail passing perilously near, but happily keeping aloof from the sharp reef of rocks around their shelter. Arthur had forgotten the child's prayers and his own, but Ulysse connected them with dressing, and the alarm of the passing ship had recalled them to the young man's mind, though he felt shy as he found that Tam Armstrong was not asleep, but was listening and watching with his keen gray eyes under their grizzled brows. Presently, when Ulysse was dropping to sleep again, the ex-

merchant began to ask questions with the intelligence of his shrewd Scottish brains.

The stern Calvinism of the North was wont to consign to utter neglect the outcast border of civilisation, where there were no decent parents to pledge themselves; and Partan Jeannie's son had grown up well-nigh in heathen ignorance among fisher lads and merchant sailors, till it had been left for him to learn among the Mohammedans both temperance and devotional habits. His whole faith and understanding would have been satisfied for ever; but there had been strange yearnings within him ever since he had lost his wife and children, and these had not passed away when Arthur Hope came in his path. Like many another renegade, he could not withstand the attraction of his

native tongue; and in this case it was doubled by the feudal attachment of the district to the family of Burnside, and a grateful remembrance of the lady who had been one of the very few persons who had ever done a kindly deed by the little out-cast. He had broken with all his Moslem ties for Arthur Hope's sake; and these being left behind, he began to make some inquiries about that Christian faith to which he must needs return—if return be the right word in the case of one who knew it so little when he had abjured it.

And Arthur had not been bred to the grim reading of the doctrine of predestination which had condemned poor Tam, even before he had embraced the faith of the Prophet. Boyish, and not over thoughtful,



the youth, when brought face to face with apostacy, had been ready to give life or liberty rather than deny his Lord; and deepened by that great decision, he could hold up that Lord and Redeemer in colours that made Tam see that his clinging to his faith was not out of mere honour and constancy, but that Mohammed had been a poor and wretched substitute for Him whom the poor fellow had denied, not knowing what he did.

‘Weel!’ he said, ‘gin the Deacon and the auld aunties had tellt me as mickle about Him, thae Moors might ha’ preached their thrapples sair for Tam. Mashallah! Maister Arthur, do ye think noo, He can forgie a puir carle for turning frae Him an’ disowning Him?’

‘I am sure of it, Tam. He forgives all who come to Him—and you—you did it in ignorance.’

‘And you trow na that I am a vessel of wrath, as they aye said?’

‘No, no, no, Tam. How could that be with one who has done what you have for us? There is good in you—noble goodness, Tam; and who could have put it there but God, the Holy Spirit? I believe myself He was leading you all the time, though you did not know it; making you a better man first, and now, through this brave kindness to us, bringing you back to be a real true Christian and know Him.’

Arthur felt as if something put the words into his mouth, but he felt them with all his heart, and the tears were in his eyes.

At sundown Tam grew restless. Force of habit impelled him to turn to Mecca and make his devotions as usual, and after nearly kneeling down on the flat stone, he turned to Arthur and said, 'I canna weel do without the bit prayer, sir.'

'No, indeed, Tam. Only let it be in the right Name.'

And Arthur knelt down beside him and said the Lord's Prayer—then, under a spell of bashfulness, muttered special entreaty for protection and safety.

They were to embark again now that darkness would veil their movements, but the wind blew so much from the north that they could not raise the sail. The oars were taken by Tam and Fareek at first, but when they came into difficult

currents Arthur changed places with the former.

And thus the hours passed. The Mediterranean may be in our eyes a European lake, but it was quite large enough to be a desert of sea and sky to the little crew of an open boat, even though they were favoured by the weather. Otherwise, indeed, they must have perished in the first storm. They durst not sail except by night, and then only with northerly winds, nor could there be much rest, since they could not lay to, and drift with the currents, lest they should be carried back to the African coast. Only one of the three men could sleep at a time, and that by one of the others taking both oars, and in time this could not but become very exhausting. It

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was true that all the coasts to the north were of Christian lands; but in their Moorish garments and in perfect ignorance of Italian, strangers might fare no better in Sardinia or Sicily than in Africa, and Spain might be no better; but Tam endeavoured to keep a north-westerly course, thinking from what Arthur had said that in this direction there was more chance of being picked up by a French vessel. Would their strength and provisions hold out? Of this there was serious doubt. Late in the year as it was, the heat and glare were as distressing by day as was the cold by night, and the continued exertion of rowing produced thirst, which made it very difficult to husband the water in the skins. Tam and Fareek were both tough,

and inured to heat and privation; but Arthur, scarce yet come to his full height, and far from having attained proportionate robustness and muscular strength, could not help flagging, though, whenever steering was of minor importance, Tam gave him the rudder, moved by his wan looks, for he never complained, even when fragments of dry goat's flesh almost choked his parched mouth. The boy was never allowed to want for anything save water; but it was very hard to hear him fretting for it. Tam took the goatskin into his own keeping, and more than once uttered a rough reproof, and yet Arthur saw him give the child half his own precious ration when it must have involved grievous suffering. The promise about giving the

cup of cold water to a little one could not but rise to his lips.

‘Cauld ! and I wish it were cauld !’ was all the response Tam made ; but his face showed some gratification.

This was no season for traffic, and they had barely seen a sail or two in the distance, and these only such as the experienced eyes of the ex-sponge merchant held to be dangerous. Deadly lassitude began to seize the young Scot ; he began scarcely to heed what was to become of them, and had not energy to try to console Ulysse, who, having in an unwatched moment managed to swallow some sea water, was crying and wailing under the additional misery he had inflicted on himself. The sun beat down with noon-

tide force, when on that fourth day, turning from its scorching, his languid eye espied a sail on the northern horizon.

‘See,’ he cried; ‘that is not the way of the Moors.’

‘Bismillah! I beg your pardon, sir,’ cried Tam, but said no more, only looked intently.

Gradually, gradually the spectacle rose on their view fuller and fuller, not the ruddy wings of the Algerine or Italian, but the square white castle-like tiers of sails rising one above another, bearing along in a south-easterly direction.

‘English or French,’ said Tam, with a long breath, for her colours and build were not yet discernible. ‘Mashallah! I beg



pardon. I mean, God grant she pass us not by !’

The mast was hastily raised, with Tam’s turban unrolled, floating at the top of it; and while he and Fareek plied their oars with might and main, he bade Arthur fire off at intervals the blunderbuss, which had hitherto lain idle at the bottom of the boat.

How long the intense suspense lasted they knew not ere Arthur cried, ‘They are slackening sail! Thank God. Tam, you have saved us! English!’

‘Not so fast!’ Tam uttered an Arabic and then a Scottish interjection.

Their signal had been seen by other eyes. An unmistakable Algerine, with the crescent flag, was bearing down on them from the opposite direction.

‘Rascals. Do they not dread the British flag?’ cried Arthur. ‘Surely that will protect us?’

‘They are smaller and lighter, and with their galley slaves can defy the wind, and loup off like a flea in a blanket,’ returned Tam, grimly. ‘Mair by token, they guess what we are, and will hold on to hae my life’s bluid if naething mair! Here! Gie us a soup of the water, and the last bite of flesh. ’Twill serve us the noo, and we shall need it nae mair any way.’

Arthur fed him, for he durst not slacken rowing for a moment. Then seeing Fareek, who had borne the brunt of the fatigue, looking spent, the youth, after swallowing a few morsels and a little foul-smelling drink, took the second oar, while double

force seemed given to the long arms lately so weary, and both pulled on in silent, grim desperation. Ulysse had given one scream at seeing the last of the water swallowed, but he too understood the situation, and obeyed Arthur's brief words, 'Kneel down and pray for us, my boy.'

The Abyssinian was evidently doing the same, after having loaded the blunderbuss ; but it was no longer necessary to use this as a signal, since the frigate had lowered her boat, which was rapidly coming towards them.

But, alas ! still more swiftly, as it seemed to those terrified eyes, came the Moorish boat—longer, narrower, more favoured by currents and winds, flying like a falcon towards its prey. It was a fearful race. Arthur's head began to swim, his breath to

labour, his arms to move stiffly as a thresher's flail ; but, just as power was failing him, an English cheer came over the waters, and restored strength for a few more resolute strokes.

Then came some puffs of smoke from the pirate's boat, a report, a jerk to their own, a fresh dash forward, even as Fareek fired, giving a moment's check to the enemy. There was a louder cheer, several shots from the English boat, a cloud from the ship's side. Then Arthur was sensible of a relaxation of effort, and that the chase was over, then that the British boat was alongside, friendly voices ringing in his ears, 'How now, mates? Runaways, eh? Where d'ye hail from?'

‘Scottish! British!’ panted out Arthur, unable to utter more, faint, giddy, and astounded by the cheers around him, and the hands stretched out in welcome. He scarcely saw or understood.

‘Queer customers here! What! a child! Who are you, my little man? And what’s this? A Moor! He’s hit—pretty hard too.’

This brought back Arthur’s reeling senses in one flash of horror, at the sight of Tam, bleeding fast in the bottom of the boat.

‘O Tam! Tam! He saved me! He is Scottish too,’ cried Arthur. ‘Sir, is he alive?’

‘I think so,’ said the officer, who had bent over Tam. ‘We’ll have him aboard

in a minute, and see what the doctor can do with him. You seem to have had a narrow escape.'

Arthur was too busy endeavouring to staunch the blood which flowed fast from poor Tam's side to make much reply, but Ulysse, perched on the officer's knee, was answering for him in mixed English and French. 'Moi, je suis le Chevalier de Bourke! My papa is Ambassador to Sweden. This gentleman is his secretary. We were shipwrecked—and M. Arture and I swam away together. The Moors were good to us, and wanted to make us Moors; but M. Arture said it would be wicked. And Yusuf bought him for a slave; but that was only from *faire la comédie*. He is *bon Chrétien* after all, and

so is poor Fareek, only he is dumb. Yusuf—that is, Tam—made me all black, and changed me for his little negro boy; and we got into the boat, and it was very hot, and oh! I am so thirsty. And now M. Arture will take me to Monsieur mon Père, and get me some nice clothes again,’ concluded the young gentleman, who, in this moment of return to civilised society, had become perfectly aware of his own rank and importance.

Arthur only looked up to verify the child’s statements, which had much struck the lieutenant. Their boat had by this time been towed alongside of the frigate, and poor Tam was hoisted on board, and the surgeon was instantly at hand; but he said at once that the poor fellow

was fast dying, and that it would be useless torture to carry him below for examination.

A few words passed with the captain, and then the little Chevalier was led away to tell his own tale, which he was doing with a full sense of his own importance; but presently the captain returned, and beckoned to Arthur, who had been kneeling beside poor Tam, moistening his lips, and bathing his face, as he lay gasping and apparently unconscious, except that he had gripped hold of his broad sash or girdle when it was taken off.

‘The child tells me he is Comte de Bourke’s son,’ said the captain, in a tentative manner, as if doubtful whether he should be understood, and certainly



Arthur looked more Moorish than European.

‘Yes, sir! He was on his way with his mother to join his father when we were taken by a Moorish corsair.’

‘But you are not French?’ said the captain, recognising the tones.

‘No, sir; Scottish—Arthur Maxwell Hope. I was to have gone as the Count’s secretary.’

‘You have escaped from the Moors? I could not understand what the boy said. Where are the lady and the rest?’

Arthur as briefly as he could, for he was very anxious to return to poor Tam, explained the wreck and the subsequent adventures, saying that he feared the poor Countess was lost, but that he had

seen her daughter and some of her suite on a rock. Captain Beresford was horrified at the idea of a Christian child among the wild Arabs. His station was Minorca, but he had just been at the Bay of Rosas, where poor Comte de Bourke's anxiety and distress about his wife and children were known, and he had received a request amounting to orders to try to obtain intelligence about them, so that he held it to be within his duty to make at once for Djigheli Bay.

For further conversation was cut short by sounds of articulate speech from poor Tam. Arthur turned hastily, and the captain proceeded to give his orders.

‘Is Maister Hope here?’

‘Here ! Yes. O Tam, dear Tam, if I could do anything !’ cried Arthur.

‘I canna see that well,’ said Tam, with a sound of anxiety. ‘Where’s my sash ?’

‘This is it, in your own hand,’ said Arthur, thinking he was wandering, but the other hand sought one of the ample folds, which was sewn over, and weighty.

‘Tak’ it ; tak’ tent of it ; ye’ll need the siller. Four hunder piastres of Tunis, not countin’ zecchins, and other sma’ coin.’

‘Shall I send them to any one at Eye-mouth ?’

Tam almost laughed. ‘Na, na ; keep them and use them yersell, sir. There’s nane at hame that wad own puir Tam. The leddy, your mither, an’ you hae been mair to me than a’ beside that’s above

ground, and what wad ye do wi'out the siller ?'

'O Tam ! I owe all and everything to you. And now——'

Tam looked up, as Arthur's utterance was choked, and a great tear fell on his face. 'Wha wad hae said,' murmured he, 'that a son of Burnside wad be greetin' for Partan Jeannie's son ?'

'For my best friend. What have you not saved me from ! and I can do nothing !'

'Nay, sir. Say but thae words again.'

'Oh for a clergyman ! Or if I had a Bible to read you the promises.'

'You shall have one,' said the captain, who had returned to his side. The surgeon muttered that the lad seemed as good as

a parson ; but Arthur heard him not, and was saying what prayers came to his mind in this stress, when, even as the captain returned, the last struggle came on. Once more Tam looked up, saying, ‘Ye’ll be good to puir Fareek ;’ and with a word more, ‘Oh, Christ : will He save such as I ?’ all was over.

‘Come away, you can do nothing more,’ said the doctor. ‘You want looking to yourself.’

For Arthur tottered as he tried to rise, and needed the captain’s kind hand as he gained his feet. ‘Sir,’ he said, as the tears gushed to his eyes, ‘he *does* deserve all honour—my only friend and deliverer.’

‘I see,’ said Captain Beresford, much moved ; ‘whatever he has been, he died a

Christian. He shall have Christian burial. And this fellow?' pointing to poor Fareek, whose grief was taking vent in moans and sobs.

'Christian — Abyssinian, but dumb,' Arthur explained; and having his promise that all respect should be paid to poor Tam's corpse, he let the doctor lead him away, for he had now time to feel how sun-scorched and exhausted he was, with giddy, aching head, and legs cramped and stiff, arms strained and shoulders painful after his three days and nights of the boat. His thirst, too, seemed unquenchable, in spite of drinks almost unconsciously taken, and though hungry he had little will to eat.

The surgeon made him take a warm

bath, and then fed him with soup, after which, on a promise of being called in due time, he consented to deposit himself in a hammock, and presently fell asleep.

When he awoke he found that clothes had been provided for him — naval uniforms; but that could not be helped, and the comfort was great. He was refreshed, but still very stiff. However, he dressed and was just ready, when the surgeon came to see whether he were in condition to be summoned, for it was near sundown, and all hands were piped up to attend poor Tam's funeral rites. His generous and faithful deed had eclipsed the memory that he was a renegade, and, indeed, it had been in such ignorance that he had had little to deny.

All the sailors stood as respectfully as if he had been one of themselves while the captain read a portion of the Burial Office. Such honours would never have been his in his native land, where at that time even Episcopalians themselves could not have ventured on any out-door rites ; and Arthur was thus doubly struck and impressed, when, as the corpse, sewn in sail-cloth and heavily weighted, was launched into the blue waves, he heard the words committing the body to the deep, till the sea should give up her dead. He longed to be able to translate them to poor Fareek, who was weeping and howling so inconsolably as to attest how good a master he had lost.

Perhaps Tam's newly-found or re-



covered Christianity might have been put to hard shocks as to the virtues he had learnt among the Moslems. At any rate Arthur often had reason to declare in after life that the poor renegade might have put many a better-trained Christian to shame.

## CHAPTER V

### ON BOARD THE 'CALYPSO'

'From whence this youth ?

His country, name, and birth declare !'

SCOTT.

'You had forgotten this legacy, Mr. Hope,' said Captain Beresford, taking Arthur into his cabin, 'and, judging by its weight, it is hardly to be neglected. I put it into my locker for security.'

'Thank you, sir,' said Arthur. 'The question is whether I ought to take it. I wished for your advice.'

'I heard what passed,' said the captain. 'I should call your right as com-

plete as if you had a will made by half a dozen lawyers. When we get into port, a few crowns to the ship's company to drink your health, and all will be right. Will you count it?'

The folds were undone, and little piles made of the gold, but neither the captain nor Arthur were much the wiser. The purser might have computed it, but Captain Beresford did not propose this, thinking perhaps that it was safer that no report of a treasure should get abroad in the ship.

He made a good many inquiries, which he had deferred till Arthur should be in a fitter condition for answering, first about the capture and wreck, and what the young man had been able to gather

about the Cabeleyzes. Then, as the replies showed that he had a gentleman before him, Captain Beresford added that he could not help asking, '*Que diable allait il faire dans cette galère ?*'

'Sir,' said Arthur, 'I do not know whether you will think it your duty to make me a prisoner, but I had better tell you the whole truth.'

'Oho!' said the captain; 'but you are too young! You could never have been out with—with—we'll call him the Chevalier.'

'I ran away from school,' replied Arthur, colouring. 'I was a mere boy, and I never was attainted,' explained Arthur, blushing. 'I have been with my Lord Nithsdale, and my mother

thought I could safely come home, and that if I came from Sweden my brother could not think I compromised him.'

'Your brother?'

'Lord Burnside. He is at Court, in favour, they say, with King George. He is my half-brother; my mother is a Maxwell.'

'There is a Hope in garrison at Port Mahon—a captain,' said the captain. 'Perhaps he will advise you what to do if you are sick of Jacobite intrigue and mystery, and ready to serve King George.'

Arthur's face lighted up. 'Will it be James Hope of Ryelands, or Dickie Hope of the Lynn, or——?'

Captain Beresford held up his hands.

'Time must show that, my young

friend,' he said, smiling. 'And now I think the officers expect you to join their mess in the gunroom.'

There Arthur found the little Chevalier strutting about in an adaptation of the smallest midshipman's uniform, and the centre of an admiring party, who were equally diverted by his consequential airs and by his accounts of his sports among the Moors. Happy fellow, he could adapt himself to any society, and was ready to be the pet and plaything of the ship's company, believing himself, when he thought of anything beyond the present, to be full on the road to his friends again.

Fareek was a much more difficult charge, for Arthur had hardly a word

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that he could understand. He found the poor fellow coiled up in a corner, just where he had seen his former master's remains disappear, still moaning and weeping bitterly. As Arthur called to him he looked up for a moment, then crawled forward, striking his forehead at intervals against the deck. He was about to kiss the feet of his former fellow-slave, the glittering gold, blue, and white of whose borrowed dress no doubt impressed him. Arthur hastily started back, to the amazement of the spectators, and called out a negative—one of the words sure to be first learnt. He tried to take Fareek's hand and raise him from his abject attitude; but the poor fellow continued kneeling, and not only were

no words available to tell him that he was free, but it was extremely doubtful whether freedom was any boon to him. One thing, however, he did evidently understand—he pointed to the St. George's pennant with the red cross, made the sign, looked an interrogation, and on Arthur's reply, 'Christians,' and reiteration of the word 'Salem,' peace, he folded his arms and looked reassured.

'Ay, ay, my hearty,' said the big boatswain, 'ye've got under the old flag, and we'll soon make you see the difference. Cut out your poor tongue, have they, the rascals, and made a dummy of you? I wish my cat was about their ears! Come along with you, and you shall find what British grog is made of.'



And a remarkable friendship arose between the two, the boatswain patronising Fareek on every occasion, and roaring at him as if he were deaf as well as dumb, and Fareek appearing quite confident under his protection, and establishing a system of signs, which were fortunately a universal language. The Abyssinian evidently viewed himself as young Hope's servant or slave, probably thinking himself part of his late master's bequest, and there was no common language between them in which to explain the difference or ascertain the poor fellow's wishes. He was a slightly-made, dexterous man, probably about five and twenty years of age, and he caught up very quickly, by imitation, the care he

could take of Arthur's clothes, and the habit of waiting on him at meals.

Meantime the *Calypso* held her course to the south-east, till the chart declared the coast to be that of Djigheli Bay, and Arthur recognised the headlands whither the unfortunate tartane had drifted to her destruction. Anchoring outside the bay, Captain Beresford sent the first lieutenant, Mr. Bullock, in the long-boat, with Arthur and a well-armed force, with instructions to offer no violence, but to reconnoitre; and if they found Mademoiselle de Bourke, or any others of the party, to do their best for their release by promises of ransom or representations of the consequences of detaining them. Arthur was prepared to offer his own

piastres at once in case of need of immediate payment. He was by this time tolerably versed in the vernacular of the Mediterranean, and a cook's boy, shipped at Gibraltar, was also supposed to be capable of interpreting.

The beautiful bay, almost realising the description of Æneas' landing-place, lay before them, the still green waters within reflecting the fantastic rocks and the wreaths of verdure which crowned them, while the white mountain-tops rose like clouds in the far distance against the azure sky. Arthur could only, however, think of all this fair scene as a cruel prison, and those sharp rocks as the jaws of a trap, when he saw the ribs of the tartane still jammed into the rock.

where she had struck, and where he had saved the two children as they were washed up the hatchway. He saw the rock where the other three had clung, and where he had left the little girl. He remembered the crowd of howling, yelling savages, leaping and gesticulating on the beach, and his heart trembled as he wondered how it had ended.

Where were the Cabeleyzes who had thus greeted them? The bay seemed perfectly lonely. Not a sound was to be heard but the regular dip of the oars, the cry of a startled bird, and the splash of a flock of seals, which had been sunning themselves on the shore, and which floundered into the sea like Proteus' flock of yore before Ulysses. Would that Proteus himself had still been

there to be captured and interrogated ! For the place was so entirely deserted that, saving for the remains of the wreck, he must have believed himself mistaken in the locality, and the lieutenant began to question him whether it had been daylight when he came ashore.

Could the natives have hidden themselves at sight of an armed vessel ? Mr. Bullock resolved on landing, very cautiously, and with a sufficient guard. On the shore some fragments of broken boxes and packing cases appeared ; and a sailor pointed out the European lettering painted on one—sse de B—. It plainly was part of the address to the Comtesse de Bourke. This encouraged the party in their search. They ascended the path which poor Hébert and

Lanty Callaghan had so often painfully climbed, and found themselves before the square of reed hovels, also deserted, but with black marks where fires had been lighted, and with traces of recent habitation.

Arthur picked up a rag of the Bourke livery, and another of a brocade which he had seen the poor Countess wearing. Was this all the relic that he should ever be able to take to her husband ?

He peered about anxiously in hopes of discovering further tokens, and Mr. Bullock was becoming impatient of his lingering, when suddenly his eye was struck by a score on the bark of a chestnut tree like a cross, cut with a feeble hand. Beneath, close to the trunk, was a stone, beyond the corner of which appeared a bit of paper.

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He pounced upon it. It was the title-page of Estelle's precious *Télémaque*, and on the back was written in French, 'If any good Christian ever finds this, I pray him to carry it to M. the French Consul at Algiers. We are five poor prisoners, the Abbé de St. Eudoce, Estelle, daughter of the Comte de Bourke, and our servants, Jacques Hébert, Laurent Callaghan, Victorine Renouf. The Cabeleyzes are taking us away to their mountains. We are in slavery, in hunger, filth, and deprivation of all things. We pray day and night that the good God will send some one to rescue us, for we are in great misery, and they persecute us to make us deny our faith. O, whoever you may be, come and deliver us while we are yet alive.'

Arthur was almost choked with tears as he translated this piteous letter to the lieutenant, and recollected the engaging, enthusiastic little maiden, as he had seen her on the Rhone, but now brought to such a state. He implored Mr. Bullock to pursue the track up the mountain, and was grieved at this being treated as absurdly impossible, but then recollecting himself, ‘You could not, sir, but I might follow her and make them understand that she must be saved——’

‘And give them another captive,’ said Bullock; ‘I thought you had had enough of that. You will do more good to this flame of yours——’

‘No flame, sir. She is a mere child, little older than her brother. But she



must not remain among these lawless savages.'

'No! But we don't throw the helve after the hatchet, my lad! All you can do is to take this epistle to the French Consul, who might find it hard to understand without your explanations. At any rate, my orders are to bring you safe on board again.'

Arthur had no choice but to submit, and Captain Beresford, who had a wife and children at home, was greatly touched by the sight of the childish writing of the poor little motherless girl; above all when Arthur explained that the high-sounding title of Abbé de St. Eudoce only meant one who was more likely to be a charge than a help to her.

France was for the nonce allied with England, and the dread of passing to Sweden through British seas had apparently been quite futile, since, if Captain Beresford recollected the Irish blood of the Count, it was only as an additional cause for taking interest in him. Towards the Moorish pirates the interest of the two nations united them. It was intolerable to think of the condition of the captives; and the captain, anxious to lose no time, rejoiced that his orders were such as to justify him in sailing at once for Algiers to take effectual measures with the consul before letting the family know the situation of the poor Demoiselle de Bourke.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE PIRATE CITY

‘ With dazed vision unawares  
From the long alley’s latticed shade  
Emerged, I came upon the great  
Pavilion of the Caliphat.  
Right to the carven cedarn doors,  
Flung inward over spangled floors,  
Broad-based flights of marble stairs  
Ran up with golden balustrade,  
    After the fashion of the time,  
And humour of the golden prime  
    Of good Haroun Alraschid.’

TENNYSON.

CIVILISED and innocuous existence has no doubt been a blessing to Algiers as well as to the entire Mediterranean, but it has not improved the picturesqueness of its aspect

any more than the wild and splendid ‘tiger, tiger burning bright,’ would be more ornamental with his claws pared, the fiery gleam of his yellow eyes quenched, and his spirit tamed, so as to render him only an exaggerated domestic cat. The steamer, whether of peace or war, is a melancholy substitute for the splendid though sinister galley, with her ranks of oars and towers of canvas, or for the dainty lateen-sailed vessels, skimming the waters like flying fish, and the Frank garb ill replaces the graceful Arab dress. The Paris-like block of houses ill replaces the graceful Moorish architecture, undisturbed when the *Calypso* sailed into the harbour, and the amphitheatre-like city rose before her, in successive terraces of dazzling white, interspersed with palms and other trees here and

there, with mosques and minarets rising above them, and with a crown of strong fortifications. The harbour itself was protected by a strongly-fortified mole, and some parley passed with the governor of the strong and grim-looking castle adjacent—a huge round tower erected by the Spaniards, and showing three ranks of brazen teeth in the shape of guns.

Finally, the Algerines having been recently brought to their bearings, as Captain Beresford said, entrance was permitted, and the *Calypso* enjoyed the shelter of the mole; while he, in full-dress uniform, took boat and went ashore, and with him the two escaped prisoners. Fareek remained on board till the English Consul could be consulted on his fate.

England and France were on curious terms with Algiers. The French had bombarded the city in 1686, and had obtained a treaty by which a consul constantly resided in the city, and the persons and property of French subjects were secured from piracy, or if captured were always released. The English had made use of the possession of Gibraltar and Minorca to enforce a like treaty. There was a little colony of European merchants—English, French, and Dutch—in the lower town, near the harbour, above which the Arab town rose, as it still rises, in a steep stair. Ships of all these nations traded at the port, and quite recently the English Consul, Thomas Thompson by name, had vindicated the honour of his flag by citing

before the Dey a man who had insulted him on the narrow causeway of the mole. The Moor was sentenced to receive 2200 strokes of bastinado on the feet, 1000 the first day, 1200 on the second, and he died in consequence, so that Englishmen safely walked the narrow streets. The Dey who had inflicted this punishment was, however, lately dead. Mehemed had been elected and installed by the chief Janissaries, and it remained to be proved whether he would show himself equally anxious to be on good terms with the Christian Powers.

Arthur's heart had learnt to beat at sight of the British ensign with emotions very unlike those with which he had seen it wave at Sheriffmuir; but it looked strange above the low walls of a Moorish

house, plain outside, but with a richly-cusped and painted horse-shoe arch at the entrance to a lovely cloistered court, with a sparkling fountain surrounded by orange trees with fruit of all shades from green to gold. Servants in white garments and scarlet fezzes, black, brown, or white (by courtesy), seemed to swarm in all directions; and one of them called a youth in European garb, but equally dark-faced with the rest, and not too good an English scholar. However, he conducted them through a still more beautiful court, lined with brilliant mosaics in the spandrels of the exquisite arches supported on slender shining marble columns.

Mr. Thompson's English coat and hearty English face looked incongruous, as at sight



of the blue and white uniform he came forward with all the hospitable courtesy due to a post-captain. There was shaking of hands, and doffing of cocked hats, and calling for wine, and pipes, and coffee, in the Alhambra-like hall, where a table covered with papers tied with red tape, in front of a homely leathern chair, looked more homelike than suitable. Other chairs there were for Frank guests, who preferred them to the divan and piles of cushions on which the Moors transacted business.

‘What can I do for you, sir?’ he asked of the captain, ‘or for this little master,’ he added, looking at Ulysse, who was standing by Arthur. ‘He is serving the King early.’

‘I don’t belong to your King George,’ broke out the young gentleman. ‘He is an *usurpateur*. I have only this uniform on till I can get my proper clothes. I am the son of the Comte de Bourke, Ambassador to Spain and Sweden. I serve no one but King Louis!’

‘That is plain to be seen!’ said Mr. Thompson. ‘The Gallic cock crows early. But is he indeed the son of Count Bourke, about whom the French Consul has been in such trouble?’

‘Even so, sir,’ replied the captain. ‘I am come to ask you to present him, with this gentleman, Mr. Hope, to your French colleague. Mr. Hope, to whom the child’s life and liberty are alike owing, has information to give which may lead to

the rescue of the boy's sister and uncle with their servants.'

Mr. Thompson had heard of a Moorish galley coming in with an account of having lost a Genoese prize, with ladies on board, in the late storm. He was sure that the tidings Mr. Hope brought would be most welcome, but he knew that the French Consul was gone up with a distinguished visitor, M. Dessault, for an audience of the Dey; and, in the meantime, his guests must dine with him. And Arthur narrated his adventures.

The Consul shook his head when he heard of Djigheli Bay.

'Those fellows, the Cabeleyzes, hate the French, and make little enough of the Dey, though they do send home Moors who fall

into their hands. Did you see a ruined fort on a promontory? That was the Bastion de France. The old King Louis put it up and garrisoned it, but these rogues contrived a surprise, and made four hundred prisoners, and ever since they have been neither to have nor to hold. Well for you, young gentleman, that you did not fall into their hands, but those of the country Moors—very decent folk—descended, they say, from the Spanish Moors. A renegade got you off, did he? Yes, they will sometimes do that, though at an awful risk. If they are caught, they are hung up alive on hooks to the walls. You had an escape, I can tell you, and so had he, poor fellow, of being taken alive.’

‘He knew the risk!’ said Arthur, in a

low voice ; ‘ but my mother had once been good to him, and he dared everything for me.’

The Consul readily estimated Arthur’s legacy as amounting to little less than £200, and was also ready to give him bills of exchange for it. The next question was as to Fareek. To return him to his own country was impossible ; and though the Consul offered to buy him of Arthur, not only did the young Scot revolt at the idea of making traffic of the faithful fellow, but Mr. Thompson owned that there might be some risk in Algiers of his being recognised as a runaway ; and though this was very slight, it was better not to give any cause of offence. Captain Beresford thought the poor man might be disposed of at Port Mahon, and Arthur kept to himself that

Tam's bequest was sacred to him. His next wish was for clothes to which he might have a better right than to the uniform of the senior midshipman of H.M.S. *Calypso*—a garb in which he did not like to appear before the French Consul. Mr. Thompson consulted his Greek clerk, and a chest belonging to a captured merchantman, which had been claimed as British property, but had not found an owner, was opened, and proved to contain a wardrobe sufficient to equip Arthur like other gentlemen of the day, in a dark crimson coat, with a little gold lace about it, and the rest of the dress white, a wide beaver hat, looped up with a rosette, and everything, indeed, except shoes, and he was obliged to retain those of the senior midshipman. With his

dark hair tied back, and a suspicion of powder, he found himself more like the youth whom Lady Nithsdale had introduced in Madame de Varennes' *salon* than he had felt for the last month ; and, moreover, his shyness and awkwardness had in great measure disappeared during his vicissitudes, and he had made many steps towards manhood.

Ulysse had in the meantime been consigned to a kind, motherly, portly Mrs. Thompson, who, accustomed as she was to hearing of strange adventures, was aghast at what the child had undergone, and was enchanted with the little French gentleman who spoke English so well, and to whom his *grand seigneur* airs returned by instinct in contact with a European lady ; but

his eye instantly sought Arthur, nor would he be content without a seat next to his protector at the dinner, early as were all dinners then, and a compound of Eastern and Western dishes, the latter very welcome to the travellers, and affording the Consul's wife themes of discourse on her difficulties in compounding them.

Pipes, siesta, and coffee followed, Mr. Thompson assuring them that his French colleague would not be ready to receive them till after the like repose had been undergone, and that he had already sent a billet to announce their coming.

The French Consulate was not distant. The *fleur-de-lis* waved over a house similar to Mr. Thompson's, but they were admitted with greater ceremony, when Mr. Thompson



at length conducted them. Servants and slaves, brown and black, clad in white with blue sashes, and white officials in blue liveries, were drawn up in the first court in two lines to receive them; and the Chevalier, taking it all to himself, paraded in front with the utmost grandeur, until, at the next archway, two gentlemen, resplendent in gold lace, came forward with low bows. At sight of the little fellow there were cries of joy. M. Dussault spread out his arms, clasped the child to his breast, and shed tears over him, so that the less emotional Englishmen thought at first that they must be kinsmen. However, Arthur came in for a like embrace as the boy's preserver; and if Captain Beresford had not stepped back and looked uncomprehending

and rigid he might have come in for the same.

Seated in the verandah, Arthur told his tale and presented the letter, over which there were more tears, as, indeed, well there might be over the condition of the little girl, and her simple mode of describing it. It was nearly a month since the corsair had arrived, and the story of the Genoese tartane being captured and lost with French ladies on board had leaked out. The French Consul had himself seen and interrogated the Dutch renegade captain, had become convinced of the identity of the unfortunate passengers, and had given up all hopes of them, so that he greeted the boy as one risen from the dead.

To know that the boy's sister and uncle

were still in the hands of the Cabeleyzes was almost worse news than the death of his mother, for this wild Arab tribe had a terrible reputation even among the Moors and Turks.

The only thing that could be devised after consultation between the two consuls, the French envoy, and the English captain, was that an audience should be demanded of the Dey, and Estelle's letter presented the next morning. Meanwhile Arthur and Ulysse were to remain as guests at the English Consulate. The French one would have made them welcome, but there was no lady in his house ; and Mrs. Thompson had given Arthur a hint that his little charge would be the better for womanly care.

There was further consultation whether

young Hope, as a runaway slave—who had, however, carried off a relapsed renegade with him—would be safe on shore beyond the precincts of the Consulate; but as no one had any claim on him, and it might be desirable to have his evidence at hand, it was thought safe that he should remain, and Captain Beresford promised to come ashore in the morning to join the petitioners to the Dey.

Perhaps he was not sorry, any more than was Arthur, for the opportunity of beholding the wonderful city and palace, which were like a dream of beauty. He came ashore early, with two or three officers, all in full uniform; and the audience having been granted, the whole party—consuls, M. Dessault, and their attendants—mounted the steep, narrow stone steps leading up the

hill between the walls of houses with fantastically carved doorways or lattices ; while bare-legged Arabs niched themselves into every coigne of vantage with baskets of fruit or eggs, or else embroidering pillows and slippers with exquisite taste.

The beauty of the buildings was unspeakable, and they projected enough to make a cool shade—only a narrow fragment of deep blue sky being visible above them. The party did not, however, ascend the whole 497 steps, as the abode of the Dey was then not the citadel, but the palace of Djenina in the heart of the city. Turning aside, they made their way thither over terraces partly in the rock, partly on the roofs of houses.

Fierce-looking Janissaries, splendidly

equipped, guarded the entrance, with an air so proud and consequential as to remind Arthur of poor Yusuf's assurances of the magnificence that might await little Ulysse as an Aga of that corps. Even as they admitted the infidels they looked defiance at them from under the manifold snowy folds of their mighty turbans.

If the beauty of the consuls' houses had struck and startled Arthur, far more did the region into which he was now admitted seem like a dream of fairyland as he passed through ranks of orange trees round sparkling fountains—worthy of Versailles itself—courts surrounded with cloisters, sparkling with priceless mosaics, in those brilliant colours which Eastern taste alone can combine so as to avoid gaudiness, arches and

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columns of ineffable grace and richness, halls with domes emulating the sky, or else ceiled with white marble lacework, whose tracery seemed delicate and varied as the richest Venice point! But the wonderful beauty seemed to him to have in it something terrible and weird, like that fairyland of his native country, whose glory and charm is overshadowed by the knowledge of the teinds to be paid to hell. It was an unnatural, incomprehensible world; and from longing to admire and examine, he only wished to be out of it, felt it a relief to fix his eyes upon the uniforms of the captain and the consuls, and did not wonder that Ulysse, instead of proudly heading the procession, shrank up to him and clasped his hand as his protector.

The human figures were as strange as the architecture; the glittering of Janissaries in the outer court, which seemed a sort of guardroom, the lines of those on duty in the next, and in the third court the black slaves in white garments, enhancing the blackness of their limbs, each with a formidable curved scimitar. At the golden cusped archway beyond, all had to remove their shoes as though entering a mosque. The Consuls bade the new-comers submit to this, adding that it was only since the recent victory that it had not been needful to lay aside the sword on entering the Dey's august presence. The chamber seemed to the eyes of the strangers one web of magic splendour — gold-crusted lacework above, arches on one side open to a beauteous



garden, and opposite semicircles of richly-robed Janissary officers, all culminating in a dazzling throne, where sat a white-turbaned figure, before whom the visitors all had to bow lower than European independence could well brook.

The Dey's features were not very distinctly seen at the distance where etiquette required them to stand ; but Arthur thought him hardly worthy to be master of such fine-looking beings as Abou Ben Zegri and many others of the Moors, being in fact a little sturdy Turk, with Tartar features, not nearly so graceful as the Moors and Arabs, nor so handsome and imposing as the Janissaries of Circassian blood.

Turkish was the court language ; and even if he understood any other, an in-

terpreter was a necessary part of the etiquette. M. Dessault instructed the interpreter, who understood with a readiness which betrayed that he was one of the many renegades in the Algerine service.

The Dey was too dignified to betray much emotion ; but he spoke a few words, and these were understood to profess his willingness to assist in the matter. A richly-clad official, who was, Mr. Thompson whispered, a Secretary of State, came to attend the party in a smaller but equally beautiful room, where pipes and coffee were served, and a consultation took place with the two Consuls, which was, of course, incomprehensible to the anxious listeners. M. Dessault's interest was deeply concerned in the matter, since he was a connection of

the Varennes family, to which poor Madame de Bourke belonged.

Commands from the Dey, it was presently explained, would be utterly disregarded by these wild mountaineers—nay, would probably lead to the murder of the captives in defiance. But it was known that if these wild beings paid deference to any one, it was to the Grand Marabout at Bugia; and the Secretary promised to send a letter in the Dey's name, which, with a considerable present, might induce him to undertake the negotiation. Therewith the audience terminated, after M. Dessault had laid a splendid diamond snuff-box at the feet of the Secretary.

The Consuls were somewhat disgusted at the notion of having recourse to the

Marabouts, whom the French Consul called *vilains charlatan*, and the English one filthy scoundrels and impostors. Like the Indian Fakirs, opined Captain Beresford; like the begging friars, said M. Dessault, and to this the Consuls assented. Just, however, as the Dominicans, besides the low class of barefooted friars, had a learned and cultivated set of brethren in high repute at the Universities, and a general at Rome, so it appeared that the Marabouts, besides their wild crew of masterful beggars, living at free quarters, partly through pretended sanctity, partly through the awe inspired by cabalistic arts, had a higher class who dwelt in cities, and were highly esteemed, for the sake of either ten years' abstinence from food or the attainment of

fifty sciences, by one or other of which means an angelic nature was held to be attained.

Fifty sciences ! This greatly astonished the strangers, but they were told by the residents that all the knowledge of the highly cultivated Arabs of Bagdad and the Moors of Spain had been handed on to the select few of their African descendants, and that really beautiful poetry was still produced by the Marabouts. Certainly no one present could doubt of the architectural skill and taste of the Algerines, and Mr. Thompson declared that not a tithe of the wonders of their mechanical art had been seen, describing the wonderful silver tree of Tlemcen, covered with birds, who, by the action of wind, were made to produce the songs of each different species which they

represented, till a falcon on the topmost branch uttered a harsh cry, and all became silent. General education had, however, fallen to a low ebb among the population, and the wisdom of the ancients was chiefly concentrated among the higher class of Marabouts, whose headquarters were at Bugia, and their present chief, Hadji Eseb Ben Hassan, had the reputation of a saint, which the Consuls believed to be well founded.

The Cabeleyzes, though most irregular Moslems, were extremely superstitious as regarded the supernatural arts supposed to be possessed by the Marabouts, and if these could be induced to take up the cause of the prisoners, there would be at least *some* chance of their success.

And not long after the party had arrived at the French Consulate, where they were to dine, a messenger arrived with a parcel rolled up in silk, embroidered with gold, and containing a strip of paper beautifully emblazoned, and in Turkish characters. The Consul read it, and found it to be a really strong recommendation to the Marabout to do his utmost for the servants of the Dey's brother, the King of France, now in the hands of the children of Shaitan.

‘ Well purchased,’ said M. Dessault ;  
‘ though that snuff-box came from the hands of the Elector of Bavaria !’

As soon as the meal was over, the French Consul, instead of taking his siesta as usual, began to take measures for chartering a French tartane to go to Bugia

immediately. He found there was great interest excited, not only among the Christian merchants, but among Turks, Moors, and Jews, so horrible was the idea of captivity among the Cabeleyzes. The Dey set the example of sending down five purses of sequins towards the young lady's ransom, and many more contributions came in unasked. It was true that the bearers expected no small consideration in return, but this was willingly given, and the feeling manifested was a perfect astonishment to all the friends at the Consulate.

The French national interpreter, Ibrahim Aga, was charged with the negotiations with the Marabout. Arthur entreated to go with him, and with some hesitation this was agreed to, since the sight of an old



friend might be needed to reassure any survivors of the poor captives—for it was hardly thought possible that all could still survive the hardships of the mountains in the depth of winter, even if they were spared by the ferocity of their captors.

Ulysse, the little son and heir, was not to be exposed to the perils of the seas till his sister's fate was decided, and accordingly he was to remain under the care of Mrs. Thompson; while Captain Beresford meant to cruise about in the neighbourhood, having a great desire to know the result of the enterprise, and hoping also that if Mademoiselle de Bourke still lived he might be permitted to restore her to her relations. Letters, clothes, and comforts were provided, and placed under the charge

of the interpreter and of Arthur, together with a considerable gratuity for the Marabout, and authority for any ransom that Cabeleyze rapacity might require,—still, however, with great doubt whether all might not be too late.

## CHAPTER VII

### ON THE MOUNTAINS

‘We cannot miss him. He doth make our fire,  
Fetch in our wood, and serve in offices  
That profit us.’ *Tempest.*

BUGIA, though midway on the ‘European lake,’ is almost unknown to modern travellers, though it has become a French possession.

It looked extremely beautiful when the French tartane entered it, rising from the sea like a magnificent amphitheatre, at the foot of the mountains that circled round it, and guarded by stern battlemented castles, while the arches of one of the great old Roman

aqueducts made a noble cord to the arc described by the lower part of the town.

The harbour, a finer one naturally than that of Algiers, contained numerous tartanes and other vessels, for, as Ibrahim Aga, who could talk French very well, informed Arthur, the inhabitants were good workers in iron, and drove a trade in ploughshares and other implements, besides wax and oil. But it was no resort of Franks, and he insisted that Arthur should only come on shore in a Moorish dress, which had been provided at Algiers. Thanks to young Hope's naturally dark complexion, and the exposure of the last month, he might very well pass for a Moor : and he had learnt to wear the white caftan, wide trousers, broad sash, and scarlet fez, circled with muslin, so

naturally that he was not likely to be noticed as a European.

The city, in spite of its external beauty, proved to be ruinous within, and in the midst of the Moorish houses and courts still were visible remnants of the old Roman town that had in past ages flourished there. Like Algiers, it had narrow climbing streets, excluding sunshine, and through these the guide Ibrahim had secured led the way; while in single file came the interpreter, Arthur, two black slaves bearing presents for the Marabout, and four men besides as escort. Once or twice there was a vista down a broader space, with an awning over it, where selling and buying were going on, always of some single species of merchandise.

Thus they arrived at one of those

Moorish houses, to whose beauty Arthur was becoming accustomed. It had, however, a less luxurious and grave aspect than the palaces of Algiers, and the green colour sacred to the Prophet prevailed in the inlaid work, which Ibrahim Aga told him consisted chiefly of maxims from the Koran.

No soldiers were on guard, but there were a good many young men wholly clad in white—neophytes endeavouring to study the fifty sciences, mostly sitting on the ground, writing copies, either of the sacred books, or of the treatises on science and medicine which had descended from time almost immemorial; all rehearsed aloud what they learnt or wrote, so as to produce a strange hum. A grave official, similarly clad, but with a green sash, came to meet

them, and told them that the chief Marabout was sick; but on hearing from the interpreter that they were bearers of a letter from the Dey, he went back with the intelligence, and presently returned salaaming very low, to introduce them to another of the large halls with lacework ceilings, where it was explained that the Grand Marabout was, who was suffering from ague. The fit was passing off, and he would be able to attend to his honoured guests so soon as they had partaken of the coffee and the pipes which were presented to them.

After a delay, very trying to Arthur's anxiety, though beguiled by such coffee and tobacco as he was never likely to encounter again, Hadji Eseb Ben Hassan,

a venerable-looking man, appeared, with a fine white beard and keen eyes, slenderly formed, and with an air of very considerable ability—much more so than the Dey, in all his glittering splendour of gold, jewels, and embroidery, whereas this old man wore the pure white woollen garments of the Moor, with the green sash, and an emerald to fasten the folds of his white turban.

Ibrahim Aga prostrated himself as if before the Dey, and laid before the Marabout, as a first gift, a gold watch; then, after a blessing had been given in return, he produced with great ceremony the Dey's letter, to which every one in the apartment did obeisance by touching the floor with their foreheads, and the Grand Marabout further rubbed it on his brow



before proceeding to read it, which he chose to do for himself, chanting it out in a low, humming voice. It was only a recommendation, and the other letter was from the French Consul containing all particulars. The Marabout seemed much startled, and interrogated the interpreter. Arthur could follow them in some degree, and presently the keen eye of the old man seemed to detect his interest, for there was a pointing to him, an explanation that he had been there, and presently Hadji Eseb addressed a question to him in the vernacular Arabic. He understood and answered, but the imperfect language or his looks betrayed him, for Hadji Eseb demanded, 'Thou art Frank, my son?'

Ibrahim Aga, mortally afraid of the

consequences of having brought a disguised Giaour into these sacred precincts, began what Arthur perceived to be a lying assurance of his having embraced Islam ; and he was on the point of breaking in upon the speech, when the Marabout observed his gesture, and said gravely, ‘ My son, falsehood is not needed to shield a brave Christian ; a faithful worshipper of Issa Ben Mariam receives honour if he does justice and works righteousness according to his own creed, even though he be blind to the true faith. Is it true, good youth, that thou art—not as this man would have me believe—one of the crew from Algiers, but art come to strive for the release of thy sister ? ’

Arthur gave the history as best he

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could, for his month's practice had made him able to speak the vernacular so as to be fairly comprehensible, and the Marabout, who was evidently a man of very high abilities, often met him half way, and suggested the word at which he stumbled. He was greatly touched by the account, even in the imperfect manner in which the youth could give it; and there was no doubt that he was a man of enlarged mind and beneficence, who had not only mastered the fifty sciences, but had seen something of the world. He had not only made his pilgrimage to Mecca more than once, but had been at Constantinople, and likewise at Tunis and Tripoli; thus, with powers both acute and awake, he understood more than his countrymen of European Powers

and their relation to one another. As a civilised and cultivated man, he was horrified at the notion of the tenderly-nurtured child being in the clutches of savages like the Cabeleyzes ; but the first difficulty was to find out where she was ; for, as he said, pointing towards the mountains, they were a wide space, and it would be hunting a partridge on the hills.

Looking at his chief councillor, Azim Reverdi, he demanded whether some of the wanderers of their order, whom he named, could not be sent through the mountains to discover where any such prisoners might be ; but after going into the court in quest of these persons, Azim returned with tidings that a Turkish soldier had returned on the previous day to the town, and had

mentioned that on Mount Couco, Sheyk Abderrahman was almost at war with his subordinates, Eyoub and Ben Yakoub, about some shipwrecked Frank captives, if they had not already settled the matter by murdering them all, and, as was well known, nothing would persuade this ignorant, lawless tribe that nothing was more abhorrent to the Prophet than human sacrifices.

Azim had already sent two disciples to summon the Turk to the presence of the Grand Marabout, and in due time he appeared—a rough, heavy, truculent fellow enough, but making awkward salaams as one in great awe of the presence in which he stood—unwilling awe perhaps—full of superstitious fear tempered by pride—for

the haughty Turks revolted against homage to one of the subject race of Moors.

His language was only now and then comprehensible to Arthur, but Ibrahim kept up a running translation into French for his benefit.

There were captives—infidels—saved from the wreck, he knew not how many, but he was sure of one—a little maid with hair like the unwound cocoon, so that they called her the Daughter of the Silkworm. It was about her that the chief struggle was. She had fallen to the lot of Ben Yakoub, who had been chestnut-gathering by the sea at the time of the wreck; but when he arrived on Mount Couco the Sheyk Abderrahman had claimed her and hers as the head of

the tribe, and had carried her off to his own adowara in the valley of Ein Gebel.

The Turk, Murad, had been induced by Yakoub to join him and sixteen more armed men whom he had got together to demand her. For it was he who had rescued her from the waves, carried her up the mountains, fed her all this time, and he would not have her snatched away from him, though for his part Murad thought it would have been well to be quit of them, for not only were they Giaours, but he verily believed them to be of the race of Jinns. The little fair-haired maid had papers with strange signs on them. She wrote—actually wrote—a thing that he believed no Sultana Velidè even had ever been known to do at Stamboul. Moreover,

she twisted strings about on her hands in a manner that was fearful to look at. It was said to be only to amuse the children, but for his part he believed it was for some evil spell. What was certain was that the other, a woman full grown, could, whenever any one offended her, raise a Jinn in a cloud of smoke, which caused such sneezing that she was lost sight of. And yet these creatures had so bewitched their captors that there were like to be hard blows before they were disposed of, unless his advice were taken to make an end of them altogether. Indeed, two of the men, the mad Santon and the chief slave, had been taken behind a bush to be sacrificed, when the Daughter of the Silkworm came between with her incanta-



tions, and fear came upon Sheyk Yakoub. Murad evidently thought it highly advisable that the chief Marabout should intervene to put a stop to these doings, and counteract the mysterious influence exercised by these strange beings.

High time, truly, Arthur and Ibrahim Aga likewise felt it, to go to the rescue, since terror and jealousy might, it appeared, at any time impel *ces barbares féroces*, as Ibrahim called them, to slaughter their prisoners. To their great joy, the Marabout proved to be of the same opinion, in spite of his sickness, which, being an intermitting ague, would leave him free for a couple of days, and might be driven off by the mountain air. He promised to set forth early the next day,

and kept the young man and the interpreter as his guests for the night, Ibrahim going first on board to fetch the parcel of clothes and provisions which M. Dessault had sent for the Abbé and Mademoiselle de Bourke, and for an instalment of the ransom, which the Hadji Eseb assured him might safely be carried under his own sacred protection.

Arthur did not see much of his host, who seemed to be very busy consulting with his second in command on the preparations, for probably the expedition was a delicate undertaking, even for him, and his companions had to be carefully chosen.

Ibrahim had advised Arthur to stay quietly where he was, and not venture into the city, and he spent his time as he

best might by the help of a *narghilé*, which was hospitably presented to him, though the strictness of Marabout life forbade the use alike of tobacco and coffee.

Before dawn the courts of the house were astir. Mules, handsomely trapped, were provided to carry the principal persons of the party wherever it might be possible, and there were some spare ones, ridden at first by inferiors, but intended for the captives, should they be recovered.

It was very cold, being the last week in November, and all were wrapped in heavy woollen haiks over their white garments, except one wild-looking fellow, whose legs and arms were bare, and who

only seemed to possess one garment of coarse dark sackcloth. He skipped and ran by the side of the mules, chanting and muttering, and Ibrahim observed in French that he was one of the Sunakites, or fanatic Marabouts, and advised Arthur to beware of him; but, though dangerous in himself, his presence would be a sufficient protection from all other thieves or vagabonds. Indeed, Arthur saw the fellow glaring unpleasantly at him, when the sun summoned all the rest to their morning devotions. He was glad that he had made the fact of his Christianity known, for he could no more act Moslem than *be* one, and Hadji Eseb kept the Sunakite in check by a stern glance, so that no harm ensued.

Afterwards Arthur was bidden to ride near the chief, who talked a good deal, asking intelligent questions. Gibraltar had impressed him greatly, and it also appeared that in one of his pilgrimages the merchant vessel he was in had been rescued from some Albanian pirates by an English ship, which held the Turks as allies, and thus saved them from undergoing vengeance for the sufferings of the Greeks. Thus the good old man felt that he owed a debt of gratitude which Allah required him to pay, even to the infidel.

Up steep roads the mules climbed. The first night the halt was at a Cabyle village, where hospitality was eagerly offered to persons of such high reputation

for sanctity as the Marabouts; but afterwards habitations grew more scanty as the ground rose higher, and there was no choice but to encamp in the tents brought by the attendants, and which seemed to Arthur a good exchange for the dirty Cabyle huts.

Altogether the journey took six days. The mules climbed along wild paths on the verge of giddy precipices, where even on foot Arthur would have hesitated to venture. The scenery would now be thought magnificent, but it was simply frightful to the mind of the early eighteenth century, especially when a constant watch had to be kept to avoid the rush of stones, or avalanches, on an almost imperceptible, nearly perpendicular path, where it

was needful to trust to the guidance of the Sunakite, the only one of the cavalcade who had been there before.

On the last day they found themselves on the borders of a slope of pines and other mountain-growing trees, bordering a wide valley or ravine where the Sunakite hinted that Abderrahman might be found.

The cavalcade pursued a path slightly indicated by the treading of feet and hoofs, and presently there emerged on them from a slighter side track between the red stems of the great pines a figure nearly bent double under the weight of two huge faggots, with a basket of great solid fir-cones on the top of them. Very scanty garments seemed to be vouchsafed

to him, and the bare arms and legs were so white, as well as of a length so unusual among Arabs or Moors, that simultaneously the Marabout exclaimed, 'One of the Giaour captives,' and Arthur cried out, 'La Jeunesse! Laurence!'

There was only just time for a start and a response, 'M. Arture! And is it yourself?' before a howl of vituperation was heard—of abuse of all the ancestry of the cur of an infidel slave, the father of tardiness—and a savage-looking man appeared, brandishing a cudgel, with which he was about to belabour his unfortunate slave, when he was arrested by astonishment, and perhaps terror, at the goodly company of Marabouts. Hadji Eseb entered into conversation with him,



and meanwhile Lanty broke forth, ‘O wirrah, wirrah, Master Arthur! an’ have they made a haythen Moor of ye? By the powers, but this is worse than all. What will Mademoiselle say?—she that has held up the faith of every one of us, like a little saint and martyr as she is! Though, to be sure, ye are but a Protestant; only these folks don’t know the differ.’

‘If you would let me speak, Laurence,’ said Arthur, ‘you would hear that I am no more a Moslem than yourself, only my Frank dress might lead to trouble. We are come to deliver you all, with a ransom from the French Consul. Are you all safe—Mademoiselle and all? and how many of you?’

‘Mademoiselle and M. l’Abbé were safe and well three days since,’ said Lanty; ‘but that spalpeen there is my master and poor Victorine’s, and will not let us put a foot near them.’

‘Where are they? How many?’ anxiously asked Arthur.

‘There are five of us altogether,’ said Lanty; ‘praise be to Him who has saved us thus far. We know the touch of cold steel at our throats, as well as ever I knew the poor misthress’ handbell; and unless our Lady, and St. Lawrence, and the rest of them, keep the better watch on us, the rascals will only ransom us without our heads, so jealous and bloodthirsty they are. The Bey of Constantina sent for us once, but all we got by that was worse usage than

the very dogs in Paris, and being dragged up these weary hills, where Maître Hébert and I carried Mademoiselle every foot of the way on our backs, and she begging our pardon so prettily—only she could not walk, the rocks had so bruised her darlin' little feet.'

'This is their chief holy man, Lanty. If any one can prevail on these savages to release you it is he.'

'And how come you to be hand and glove with them, Masther Arthur,—you that I thought drowned with poor Madame and the little Chevalier and the rest?'

'The Chevalier is not drowned, Laurent. He is safe in the Consul's house at Algiers.'

'Now heaven and all the saints be praised! The Chevalier safe and well!

'Tis a very miracle !' cried Lanty, letting fall his burthen, as he clasped his hands in ecstasy and performed a caper which, in spite of all his master Eyoub's respect for the Marabouts, brought a furious yell of rage, and a tremendous blow with the cudgel, which Lanty, in his joy, seemed to receive as if it had been a feather.

Hadji Eseb averted a further blow ; and understanding from Arthur that the poor fellow's transport was caused by the tidings of the safety of his master's son, he seemed touched, and bade that he and Eyoub should lead the way to the place of durance of the chief prisoners. On the way Ibrahim Aga interrogated both Eyoub in vernacular Arabic and Lanty in French. The former was sullen, only speaking from his evident

awe of the Marabouts, the latter voluble with joy and hope.

Arthur learnt that the letter he had found under the stone was the fourth that Estelle and Hébert had written. There had been a terrible journey up the mountains, when Lanty had fully thought Victorine must close her sufferings in some frightful ravine ; but, nevertheless, she had recovered health and strength with every day's ascent above the close, narrow valley. They were guarded all the way by Arabs armed to the teeth to prevent a rescue by the Bey of Constantina.

On their arrival at the valley, which was the headquarters of the tribe, the sheyk of the entire clan had laid claim to the principal captives, and had carried off the

young lady and her uncle ; and in his dwelling she had a boarded floor to sleep on, and had been made much more comfortable than in the squalid huts below. Her original master, Yakoub, had, however, come to seize her, with the force described by Murad. Then it was that again there was a threat to kill rather than resign them ; but on this occasion it was averted by Sheyk Abderrahman's son, a boy of about fourteen, who threw himself on his knees before Mademoiselle, and prayed his father earnestly for her life.

‘They spared her then,’ said Lanty, ‘and, mayhap, worse still may come of that. Yakoub, the villain, ended by getting her back till they can have a council of their tribe, and there she is in his

filthy hut ; but the gossoon, Selim, as they call him, prowls about the place as if he were bewitched. All the children are, for that matter, wherever she goes. She makes cats' cradles for them, and sings to them, and tells them stories in her own sweet way out of the sacred history—such as may bring her into trouble one of these days. Maître Hébert heard her one day telling them the story of Moses, and he warned her that if she went on in that fashion it might be the death of us all. “But,” says she, “suppose we made Selim, and little Zuleika, and all the rest of them, Christians? Suppose we brought all the tribe to come down and ask baptism, like as St. Nona did in the *Lives of the Saints*?” He told her it was more like that they

would only get her darling little head cut off, if no worse, but he could not get her to think that mattered at all at all. She would have a crown and a palm up in heaven, and VM after her name in the Calendar on earth, bless her.'

Then he went on to tell that Yakoub was furious at the notion of resigning his prize, and (Agamemnon-like) declared that if she were taken from him he should demand Victorine from Eyoub. Unfortunately she was recovering her good looks in the mountain air; and, worse still, the spring of her 'blessed little Polichinelle' was broken, though happily no one guessed it, and hitherto it had been enough to show them the box.



## CHAPTER VIII

### CHRYSEIS AND BRISEIS

‘The child

Restore, I pray, her proffered ransom take,  
And in His priest, the Lord of Light revere.

Then through the ranks assenting murmurs rang,  
The priest to reverence, and the ransom take.’

HOMER (DERBY).

FOR one moment, before emerging from the forest, looking through an opening in the trees, down a steep slope, a group of children could be seen on the grass in front of the huts composing the adowara, little brown figures in scanty garments, lying about evidently listening intently to the figure, the gleam of whose blonde hair

showed her instantly to be Estelle de Bourke.

However, either the deputation had been descried, or Eyoub may have made some signal, for when the cavalcade had wound about through the remaining trees, and arrived among the huts, no one was to be seen. There was only the irregular square of huts built of rough stones and thatched with reeds, with big stones to keep the thatch on in the storm; a few goats were tethered near, and there was a rush of the great savage dogs, but they recognised Eyoub and Lanty, and were presently quieted.

‘This is the chief danger,’ whispered Lanty. ‘Pray heaven the rogues do not murder them rather than give them up!’

The Sunakite, beginning to make strange contortions and mutterings in a low voice, seemed to terrify Eyoub greatly. Whether he pointed it out or not, or whether Eyoub was induced by his gestures to show it, was not clear to Arthur's mind ; but at the chief abode, an assemblage of two stone hovels and rudely-built walls, the party halted, and made a loud knocking at the door, Hadji Eseb's solemn tones bidding those within to open in the name of Allah.

It was done, disclosing a vista of men with drawn scimitars. The Marabout demanded without ceremony where were the prisoners.

‘At yonder house,’ he was answered by Yakoub himself, pointing to the farther end of the village.

‘Dog of a liar,’ burst forth the Sunakite. ‘Dost thou think to blind the eyes of the beloved of Allah, who knoweth the secrets of heaven and earth, and hath the sigil of Suleiman Ben Daoud, wherewith to penetrate the secret places of the false?’

The ferocious-looking guardians looked at each other as though under the influence of supernatural terror, and then Hadji Eseb spoke: ‘Salaam Aleikum, my children; no man need fear who listens to the will of Allah, and honours his messengers.’

All made way for the dignified old man and his suite, and they advanced into the court, where two men with drawn swords were keeping guard over the captives, who were on their knees in a corner of the court.

The sabres were sheathed, and there was a shuffling away at the advance of the Marabouts, Sheyk Yakoub making some apology about having delayed to admit such guests, but excusing himself on the score of supposing they were emissaries sent by those whose authority he so defied that he had sworn to slaughter his prisoners rather than surrender them.

Hadji Eseb replied with a quotation from the Koran forbidding cruelty to the helpless, and sternly denounced wrath on the transgressors, bidding Yakoub draw off his savage bodyguard.

The man was plainly alarmed, more especially as the Sunakite broke out into one of his wild wails of denunciation, waving his hands like a prophet of wrath,

and predicting famine, disease, pestilence to these slack observers of the law of Mohammed.

This completed the alarm. The body-guard fled away pell-mell, Yakoub after them. His women shut themselves into some innermost recesses, and the field was left to the Marabouts and the prisoners, who, not understanding what all this meant, were still kneeling in their corner. Hadji Eseb bade Arthur and the interpreter go to reassure them.

At their advance a miserable embrowned figure, barefooted and half clad in a ragged haik, roped round his waist, threw himself before the fair-haired child, crying out in imperfect Arabic, ‘Spare her, spare her, great lord ! much is to be won by saving her.’

‘We are come to save her,’ said Arthur in French. ‘Maître Hébert, do you not know me?’

Hébert looked up. ‘M. Arture! M. Arture! Risen from the dead!’ he cried, threw himself into the young man’s arms, and burst out into a vehement sob; but in a second he recovered his manners and fell back, while Estelle looked up.

‘M. Arture,’ she repeated. ‘Ah! is it you? Then, is my mamma alive and safe?’

‘Alas! no,’ replied Arthur; ‘but your little brother is safe and well at Algiers, and this good man, the Marabout, is come to deliver you.’

‘My mamma said you would protect us, and I knew you would come, like Mentor, to save us,’ said Estelle, clasping

her hands with ineffable joy. 'Oh, Monsieur! I thank you next to the good God and the saints!' and she began fervently kissing Arthur's hand. He turned to salute the Abbé, but was shocked to see how much more vacant the poor gentleman's stare had become, and how little he seemed to comprehend.

'Ah!' said Estelle, with her pretty, tender, motherly air, 'my poor uncle has never seemed to understand since that dreadful day when they dragged him and Maître Hébert out into the wood and were going to kill them. And he has fever every night. But, oh, M. Arture, did you say my brother was safe?' she repeated, as if not able to dwell enough upon the glad tidings.

'And I hope you will soon be with him,'



said Arthur. 'But, Mademoiselle, let me present you to the Grand Marabout, a sort of Moslem Abbé, who has come all this way to obtain your release.'

He led Estelle forward, when she made a courtesy fit for her grandmother's *salon*, and in very fluent Cabeleyze dialect gave thanks for the kindness of coming to release her, and begged him to excuse her uncle, who was sick, and, as you say here, 'stricken of Allah.'

The little French demoiselle's grace and politeness were by no means lost on the Marabout, who replied to her graciously; and at the sight of her reading M. Dessault's letter, which the interpreter presented to her, one of the suite could not help exclaiming, 'Ah! if women such as this will be

went abroad in our streets, there would be nothing to hope for in Paradise.'

Estelle did not seem to have suffered in health ; indeed, in Arthur's eyes, she seemed in these six weeks to have grown, and to have more colour, while her expression had become less childish, deeper, and higher. Her hair did not look neglected, though her dress—the same dark blue which she had worn on the voyage—had become very ragged and soiled, and her shoes were broken, and tied on with strips of rag.

She gave a little scream of joy when the parcel of clothes sent by the French Consul was given to her, only longing to send some to Victorine before she retired to enjoy the comfort of clean and respectable clothes ; and in the meantime something

was attempted for the comfort of her companions, though it would not have been safe to put them into Frankish garments, and none had been brought. Poor Hébert was the very ghost of the stout and important *maître d'hôtel*, and, indeed, the faithful man had borne the brunt of all the privations and sufferings, doing his utmost to shield and protect his little mistress and her helpless uncle.

When Estelle reappeared, dressed once more like a little French lady (at least in the eyes of those who were not particular about fit), she found a little feast being prepared for her out of the provisions sent by the consuls ; but she could not sit down to it till Arthur, escorted by several of the Marabout's suite, had carried a share both of

the food and the garments to Lanty and Victorine.

They, however, were not to be found. The whole adowara seemed to be deserted except by a few frightened women and children, and Victorine and her Irish swain had no doubt been driven off into the woods by Eyoub—no Achilles certainly, but equally unwilling with the great Pelides to resign Briseis as a substitute for Chryseis.

It was too late to attempt anything more that night; indeed, at sundown it became very cold. A fire was lighted in the larger room, in the centre, where there was a hole for the exit of the smoke. The Marabouts seemed to be praying or reciting the Koran on one side of it, for there was a continuous chant or hum going

on there ; but they seemed to have no objection to the Christians sitting together on the other side conversing and exchanging accounts of their adventures. Maître Hébert could not sufficiently dilate on the spirit, cheerfulness, and patience that Mademoiselle had displayed through all. He only had to lament her imprudence in trying to talk of the Christian faith to the children, telling them stories of the saints, and doing what, if all the tribe had not been so ignorant, would have brought destruction on them all. ‘I would not have Monseigneur there know of it for worlds,’ said he, glancing at the Grand Marabout.

‘Selim loves to hear such things,’ said Estelle composedly. ‘I have taught him

to say the Paternoster, and the meaning of it, and Zuleika can nearly say them.'

'Miséricorde!' cried M. Hébert. 'What may not the child have brought on herself!'

'Selim will be a chief,' returned Estelle. 'He will make his people do as he pleases, or he would do so; but now there will be no one to tell him about the true God and the blessed Saviour,' she added sadly.

'Mademoiselle!' cried Hébert in indignant anger,—'Mademoiselle would not be ungrateful for our safety from these horrors.'

'Oh no!' exclaimed the child. 'I am very happy to return to my poor papa, and my brothers, and my grandmamma. But I am sorry for Selim! Perhaps some good mission fathers would go out to them like

those we heard of in Acadia; and by and by, when I am grown up, I can come back with some sisters to teach the women to wash their children and not scold and fight.'

The *maître d'hôtel* sighed, and was relieved when Estelle retired to the deserted women's apartments for the night. He seemed to think her dangerous language might be understood and reported.

The next morning the Marabout sent messengers, who brought back Yakoub and his people, and before many hours a sort of council was convened in the court of Yakoub's house, consisting of all the neighbouring heads of families, brown men, whose eyes gleamed fiercely out from under their haiks, and who were armed to the

teeth with sabres, daggers, and, if possible, pistols and blunderbusses of all the worn-out patterns in Europe—some no doubt as old as the Thirty Years War; while those who could not attain to these weapons had the long spears of their ancestors, and were no bad representatives of the Amalekites of old.

After all had solemnly taken their seats there was a fresh arrival of Sheyk Abderrahman and his ferocious-looking following. He himself was a man of fine bearing, with a great black beard, and a gold-embroidered sash stuck full of pistols and knives, and with poor Madame de Bourke's best pearl necklace round his neck. His son Selim was with him, a slim youth, with beautiful soft eyes glancing out



from under a haik, striped with many colours, such as may have been the coat that marked Joseph as the heir.

There were many salaams and formalities, and then the chief Marabout made a speech, explaining the purpose of his coming, diplomatically allowing that the Cabeleyzes were not subject to the Dey of Algiers, but showing that they enjoyed the advantages of the treaty with France, and that therefore they were bound to release the unfortunate shipwrecked captives, whom they had already plundered of all their property. So far Estelle and Arthur, who were anxiously watching, crouching behind the wall of the deserted house court, could follow. Then arose yells and shouts of denial, and words too rapid to be followed.

In a lull, Hadji Eseb might be heard proffering ransom, while the cries and shrieks so well known to accompany bargaining broke out.

Ibrahim Aga, who stood by the wall, here told them that Yakoub and Eyoub seemed not unwilling to consent to the redemption of the male captives, but that they claimed both the females. Hébert clenched his teeth, and bade Ibrahim interfere and declare that he would never be set free without his little lady.

Here, however, the tumult lulled a little, and Abderrahman's voice was heard declaring that he claimed the Daughter of the Silkworm as a wife for his son.

Ibrahim then sprang to the Marabout's side, and was heard representing that the

young lady was of high and noble blood. To which Abderrahman replied with the dignity of an old lion, that were she the daughter of the King of the Franks himself, she would only be a fit mate for the son of the King of the Mountains. A fresh roar of jangling and disputing began, during which Estelle whispered, ‘Poor Selim, I know he would believe—he half does already. It would be like Clotilda.’

‘And then he would be cruelly murdered, and you too,’ returned Arthur.

‘We should be martyrs,’ said Estelle, as she had so often said before ; and as Hébert shuddered and cried, ‘Do not speak of such things, Mademoiselle, just as there is hope,’ she answered, ‘Oh no ! do not think I want to stay in this dreadful place—only

if I should have to do so—I long to go to my brother and my poor papa. Then I can send some good fathers to convert them.’

‘Ha!’ cried Arthur; ‘what now! They are at one another’s throats!’

Yakoub and Eyoub with flashing sabres were actually flying at each other, but Marabouts were seizing them and holding them back, and the Sunakite’s chant arose above all the uproar.

Ibrahim was able to explain that Yakoub insisted that if the mistress were appropriated by Abderrahman, the maid should be his compensation. Eyoub, who had been the foremost in the rescue from the wreck, was furious at the demand, and they were on the point of fighting when

thus withheld; while the Sunakite was denouncing woes on the spoiler and the lover of Christians, which made the blood of the Cabeleyzes run cold. Their flocks would be diseased, storms from the mountains would overwhelm them, their children would die, their name and race be cut off, if infidel girls were permitted to bewitch them and turn them from the faith of the Prophet. He pointed to young Selim, and demanded whether he were not already spell-bound by the silken daughter of the Giaour to join in her idolatry.

There were howls of rage, a leaping up, a drawing of swords, a demand that the unbelievers should die at once. It was a cry the captives knew only too well. Arthur grasped a pistol, and loosened his

sword, but young Selim had thrown himself at the Marabout's feet, sobbing out entreaties that the maiden's life might be saved, and assurances that he was a staunch believer ; while his father, scandalised at such an exhibition on behalf of any such chattel as a female, roughly snatched him from the ground, and insisted on his silence.

The Marabouts had, at their chief's signal, ranged themselves in front of the inner court, and the authority of the Hadji had imposed silence even on the fanatic. He spoke again, making them understand that Frankish vengeance in case of a massacre could reach them even in their mountains when backed by the Dey. And to Abderrahman he represented that the only safety for his

son, the only peace for his tribe, was in the surrender of these two dangerous causes of altercation.

The 'King of the Mountains' was convinced by the scene that had just taken place of the inexpedience of retaining the prisoners alive. And some pieces of gold thrust into his hand by Ibrahim may have shown him that much might be lost by slaughtering them.

The Babel which next arose was of the amicable bargaining sort. And after another hour of suspense the interpreter came to announce that the mountaineers, out of their great respect, not for the Dey, but the Marabout, had agreed to accept 900 piastres as the ransom of all the five captives, and that the

Marabout recommended an immediate start, lest anything should rouse the ferocity of the tribe again.

Estelle's warm heart would fain have taken leave of the few who had been kind to her; but this was impossible, for the women were in hiding, and she could only leave one or two kerchiefs sent from Algiers, hoping Zuleika might have one of them. Ibrahim insisted on her being veiled as closely as a Moham-medan woman as she passed out. One look between her and Selim might have been fatal to all; though hers may have been in all childish innocence, she did not know how the fiery youth was writhing in his father's indignant grasp, forcibly withheld from rushing after one



who had been a new life and revelation to him.

Mayhap the passion was as fleeting as it was violent, but the Marabout knew it boded danger to the captives to whom he had pledged his honour. He sent them, mounted on mules, on in front, while he and his company remained in the rear, watching till Lanty and Victorine were driven up like cattle by Eyoub, to whom he paid an earnest of his special share of the ransom. He permitted no pause, not even for a greeting between Estelle and poor Victorine, nor to clothe the two unfortunates, more than by throwing a mantle to poor Victorine, who had nothing but a short petticoat and a scanty, ragged, filthy bournouse.

She shrouded herself as well as she could when lifted on her mule, scarce perhaps yet aware what had happened to her, only that Lanty was near, muttering benedictions and thanksgivings as he vibrated between her mule and that of the Abbé.

It was only at the evening halt that, in a cave on the mountain-side, Estelle and Victorine could cling to each other in a close embrace with sobs of joy; and while Estelle eagerly produced clothes from her little store of gifts, the poor *femme de chambre* wept for joy to feel indeed that she was free, and shed a fresh shower of tears of joy at the sight of a brush and comb.

Lanty was purring over his foster-

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brother, and cosseting him like a cat over a newly-recovered kitten, resolved not to see how much shaken the poor Abbé's intellect had been, and quite sure that the reverend father would be altogether himself when he only had his *soutane* again.

## CHAPTER IX

### WELCOME

‘ Well hath the Prophet-chief your bidding done.’

MOORE (*Lalla Rookh*).

BUGIA was thoroughly Moorish, and subject to attacks of fanaticism. Perhaps the Grand Marabout did not wholly trust the Sunakite not to stir up the populace, for he would not take the recovered captives to his palace, avoided the city as much as possible, and took them down to the harbour, where, beside the old Roman quay, he caused his trusty attendant, Reverdi, to hire a boat to take them out to the French tartane—Reverdi

himself going with them to ensure the fidelity of the boatmen. Estelle would have kissed the good old man's hand in fervent thanks, but, child as she was, he shrank from her touch as an unholy thing; and it was enforced on her and Victorine that they were by no means to remove their heavy muffings till they were safe on board the tartane, and even out of harbour. The Frenchman in command of the vessel was evidently of the same mind, and, though enchanted to receive them, sent them at once below. He said his men had been in danger of being mobbed in the streets, and that there were reports abroad that the harem of a great Frank chief, and all his treasure, were being recovered from the Cabeley-

zes, so that he doubted whether all the influence of the Grand Marabout might prevent their being pursued by corsairs.

Right glad was he to recognise the pennant of the *Calypso* outside the harbour, and he instantly ran up a signal flag to intimate success. A boat was immediately put off from the frigate, containing not only Lieutenant Bullock, but an officer in scarlet, who had no sooner come on deck than he shook Arthur eagerly by the hand, exclaiming,

‘’Tis you, then ! I cannot be mistaken in poor Davie’s son, though you were a mere bit bairn when I saw you last !’

‘ Archie Hope ! ’ exclaimed Arthur, joyfully. ‘ Can you tell me anything of my mother ? ’

‘She was well when last I heard of her, only sore vexed that you should be cut off from her by your own fule deed, my lad ! Ye’ve thought better of it now ?’

Major Hope was here interrupted by the lieutenant, who brought an invitation from Captain Beresford to the whole French party to bestow themselves on board the *Calypso*. After ascertaining that the Marabout had taken up their cause, and that the journey up Mount Couco and back again could not occupy less than twelve or fourteen days, he had sailed for Minorca, where he had obtained sanction to convey any of the captives who might be rescued to Algiers. He had also seen Major Hope, who, on hearing of the adventures of his young kinsman,

asked leave of absence to come in search of him, and became the guest of the officers of the *Calypso*.

Arthur found himself virtually the head of the party, and, after consultation with Ibrahim Aga and Maître Hébert, it was agreed that there would be far more safety, as well as better accommodation, in the British ship than in the French tartane, and Arthur went down to communicate the proposal to Estelle, whom the close, little, evil-smelling cabin was already making much paler than all her privations had done.

‘An English ship,’ she said. ‘Would my papa approve?’ and her little prim diplomatic air sat comically on her.

‘Oh yes,’ said Arthur. ‘He himself



asked the captain to seek for you, Made-moiselle. There is peace between our countries, you know.'

'That is good,' she said, jumping up. 'For oh! this cabin is worse than it is inside Yakoub's hut! Oh take me on deck before I am ill!'

She was able to be her own little charming French and Irish self when Arthur led her on deck; and her gracious thanks and pretty courtesy made them agree that it would have been ten thousand pities if such a creature could not have been redeemed from the savage Arabs.

The whole six were speedily on board the *Calypso*, where Captain Beresford received the little heroine with politeness worthy of her own manners. He had given

up his own cabin for her and Victorine, purchased at Port Mahon all he thought she could need, and had even recollected to procure clerical garments for the Abbé—a sight which rejoiced Lanty's faithful heart, though the poor Abbé was too ill all the time of the voyage to leave his berth. Arthur's arrival was greeted by the Abyssinian with an inarticulate howl of delight, as the poor fellow crawled to his feet, and began kissing them before he could prevent it. Fareek had been the pet of the sailors, and well taken care of by the boatswain. He was handy, quick, and useful, and Captain Bullock thought he might pick up a living as an attendant in the galley; but he showed that he held himself to belong absolutely to Arthur, and rendered every

service to him that he could, picking up what was needful in the care of European clothes by imitation of the captain's servant, and showing a dexterity that made it probable that his cleverness had been the cause of the loss of a tongue that might have betrayed too much. To young Hope he seemed like a sacred legacy from poor Tam, and a perplexing one, such as he could hardly leave in his dumbness to take the chances of life among sailors.

His own plans were likewise to be considered, and Major Hope concerned himself much about them. He was a second cousin—a near relation in Scottish estimation—and no distant neighbour. His family were Tories, though content to submit to the House of Hanover, and had

always been on friendly terms with Lady Hope.

‘I writ at once, on hearing of you, to let her know you were in safety,’ said the major. ‘And what do you intend the noo?’

‘Can I win home?’ anxiously asked Arthur. ‘You know I never was attainted!’

‘And what would ye do if you were at home?’

‘I should see my mother.’

‘Small doubt of the welcome she would have for you, my poor laddie,’ said the major; ‘but what next?’ And as Arthur hesitated, ‘I misdoubt greatly whether Burnside would give you a helping hand if you came fresh from colloquing with French

Jacobites, though my father and all the rest of us at the Lynn aye told him that he might thank himself and his dour old dominie for your prank—you were but a schoolboy then—you are a man now; and though your poor mother would be blithe to set eyes on you, she would be sairly perplexed what gate you had best turn thereafter. Now, see here! There's talk of our being sent to dislodge the Spaniards from Sicily. You are a likely lad, and the colonel would take my word for you if you came back with me to Port Mahon as a volunteer; and once under King George's colours, there would be pressure enough from all of us Hopes upon Burnside to gar him get you a commission, unless you win one for yourself. Then you could gang

hame when the time was served, a credit and an honour to all !'

'I had rather win my own way than be beholden to Burnside,' said Arthur, his face lighting at the proposal.

'Hout, man ! That will be as the chances of war may turn out. As to your kit, we'll see to that ! Never fear. Your mother will make it up.'

'Thanks, Archie, with all my heart, but I am not so destitute,' and he mentioned Yusuf's legacy, which the major held that he was perfectly justified in appropriating ; and in answer to his next question, assured him that he would be able to retain Fareek as his servant.

This was enough for Arthur, who knew that the relief to his mother's mind of his

safety and acceptance as a subject would outweigh any disappointment at not seeing his face, when he would only be an unforgiven exile, liable to be informed against by any malicious neighbour.

He borrowed materials, and had written a long letter to her before the *Calypso* put in at Algiers. The little swift tartane had forestalled her ; and every one was on the watch, when Estelle, who had been treated like a little princess on board, was brought in the long-boat with all her party to the quay. Though it was at daybreak, not only the European inhabitants, but Turks, Arabs, Moors, and Jews thronged the wharf in welcome ; and there were jubilant cries as all the five captives could be seen seated in the boat in the light of the rising sun.

M. Dessault, with Ulysse in his hand, stood foremost on the quay, and the two children were instantly in each other's embrace. Their uncle had to be helped out. He was more bewildered than gratified by the welcome. He required to be assured that the multitudes assembled meant him no harm, and would not move without Lanty; and though he bowed low in return to M. Dessault's greeting, it was like an automaton, and with no recognition.

Estelle, between her brother and her friend, and followed by all the rest, was conducted by the French Consul to the chapel, arranged in one of the Moorish rooms. There stood beside the altar his two chaplains, and at once mass was commenced, while all threw themselves on



their knees in thankfulness; and at the well-known sound a ray of intelligence and joy began to brighten even poor Phelim's features.

Arthur, in overflowing joy, could not but kneel with the others; and when the service concluded with the *Te Deum's* lofty praise, his tears dropped for joy and gratitude that the captivity was over, the children safe, and himself no longer an outcast and exile.

He had, however, to take leave of the children sooner than he wished, for the *Calypso* had to sail the next day.

Ulysse wept bitterly, clung to him, and persisted that he *was* their secretary, and must go with them. Estelle, too, had tears in her eyes; but she said, half in earnest,

‘ You know, Mentor vanished when Télémaque came home ! Some day, Monsieur, you will come to see us at Paris, and we shall know how to show our gratitude ! ’

Both Lanty and Maître Hébert promised to write to M. Arture ; and in due time he received not only their letters but fervent acknowledgments from the Comte de Bourke, who knew that to him was owing the life and liberty of the children.

From Lanty Arthur further heard that the poor Abbé had languished and died soon after reaching home. His faithful foster-brother was deeply distressed, though the family had rewarded the fidelity of the servants by promoting Hébert to be intendant of the Provençal estates, while Lanty was wedded to Victorine, with a *dot* that

enabled them to start a flourishing *per-ruquier's* shop, and make a home for his mother when little Jacques outgrew her care.

Estelle was in due time married to a French nobleman, and in after years 'General Sir Arthur Hope' took his son and daughter to pay her a long visit in her Provençal *château*, and to converse on the strange adventures that seemed like a dream. He found her a noble lady, well fulfilling the promise of her heroic girlhood, and still lamenting the impossibility of sending any mission to open the eyes of the half-converted Selim.







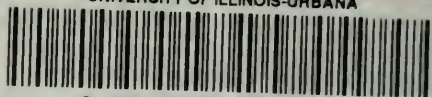








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